

IAD ORIENTAL SERIES : 16  
**EDUCATION IN MUSLIM INDIA**

*BEING*  
*AN INQUIRY INTO THE STATE OF*  
*EDUCATION DURING THE MUSLIM*  
*PERIOD OF INDIAN HISTORY*  
*(1000—1800 A. C.)*

BY

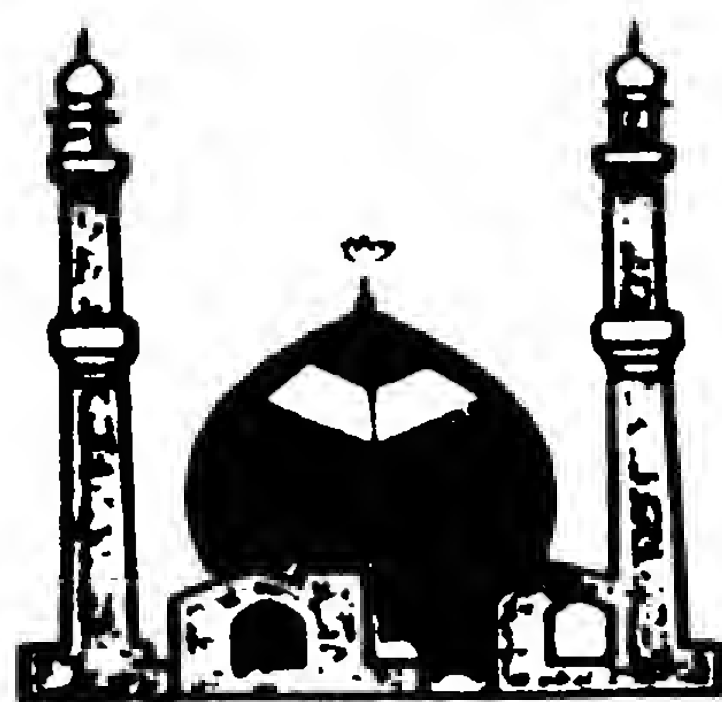
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*" Mediæval India ", " The Mughal Empire "*

*and*

*" Some Cultural Aspects of Muslim Rule in India "*



**IDARAH-I ADABIYAT-I DELLI**

2009, QASIMJAN STREET. DELHI-6  
(INDIA)

# **IDARAH-I ADBIYAT-I DELLI**

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**TO  
MY PARENTS AND TEACHERS  
IN TOKEN OF MY GRATITUDE**





## PREFACE

"They also serve who stand and wait."

—Milton.

**Personal Expression.** While studying original sources and contemporary histories for writing a comprehensive history of Muslim Rule in India, I came across a number of notices on education and educational matters. Though I dealt with them at some length in my *Mediæval India*, and *The Mughal Empire*, I thought it proper to take them up in a separate volume—hence this book. The absence of good libraries such as exist in important educational centres, coupled with my own limited resources, rendered it peculiarly difficult for me in this province to procure the books over which the information on the subject lies scattered. It was my interest in education that drove me from place to place in search of books drawn upon for material, and it was my industry that enabled me to write this book on a rather neglected subject of our study during my college career. Considering the difficulties, referred to above, and the fact that the book was carried through the press amidst a great pressure of work, I am afraid I cannot expect it to be free from flaws, but I hope I will be able to remove them in its subsequent editions, should these be called for. For the present, I shall deem myself richly rewarded if this humble effort—a pure labour of love—succeeds in arresting attention and evoking interest, enlisting sympathy and stimulating further researches into the subject.

**A Word of Warning.** It will not be fair on my part if I do not warn the reader against a pitfall which I came across in the course of my investigations in Indian History. Most of the modern writers have consciously or unconsciously adopted the

modern standard of civilization as a criterion where-with they judge the things of the past. They compare the past with the present and denounce the former in the light of modern conceptions of culture and civilization without having regard to the time that has scanned the interval in between—time that has made marvellous improvements in and additions to the existing knowledge of man and changed his conception of things. Such a comparison is not only unfair but injurious unless it aims at the edification of the future. Progress is the law of life, and time is an important factor, which, when a comparison is attempted, must be taken into consideration. And when this is done, it will be evident that education, which is supposed to have been neglected, was sufficiently sought and provided for in the Islamic times, so much so that India at that time could favourably compare and often successfully compete with any country of the world in point of education. Imagine, for instance, the absence of the printing press side by side with the presence of thousands of libraries containing innumerable manuscripts. Imagine also the state of crude means of conveyance and with it the flocking of students from far and wide to important centres of education.

This book is a tribute of gratitude to all those contemporary chroniclers and modern historians whose monumental works I have consulted for constructing this narrative; to Professor Haroon K. Sherwani of the Osmania University for contributing the Foreword; and to the Judicial Commissioner, N.-W. F. P., for permitting me to publish it.

Khudadad Street,  
PESHAWAR CITY,  
March 10, 1936.

S. M. JAFFAR.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

Ain.	... Āin-i-Akbari by 'Allāma Abul Fazal.
B.I.S.	... Bibliotheca Indica Series.
H.U.L.S.	.. Home University Library Series.
J.A.S.B.	... Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
J.R.A.S.	... Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.
J.R.S.A.	... Journal of the Royal Society of Arts.
M.A.S.B.	... Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
M.U.J.	... Muslim University Journal.
N.K.T.	... Newal Kishor Text.
P A.S.B.	... Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
Trans.	... Translation (English).

## CORRIGENDA

- Page 108, line 6 (from foot), *for* litrary *read* literary.
- Page 140, line 11 (from top), *insert* and *after* emperor.
- Page 165, line 12 (from foot), *for* thas *read* that.
- Page 185, line 5 (from foot) *insert* the *after* from.
- Page 193, line 2 (from top), *for* ministrel *read* minstrel.
- Pages 227 and 240, lines 6 and 4 (from foot), *for* chose *read*  
choose.
- Page 234, line 7 (from foot), *for* immensley *read* immensely.

## FOREWORD

I BELIEVE it was Froude who once said something to the effect that one should not raise one's pen to write unless one can add to human knowledge, and there is no doubt that Mr. S. M. Jaffar has done a great service to the cause of education in general and Indian Culture in particular by writing this book on 'Education in Muslim India' and thus made a distinctive contribution to the field of Indian historical literature.

Time was when a student of Indian history had to be content with knowing something about warring dynasties, court intrigues, internecine feuds and other matters which went to make the 'history' of this country a subject of useless, if not actually harmful, study. Happily we have now come to feel the necessity of the whole of Indian history being rewritten not so much from the point of view of occurrences at the capitals of various states, as in order to delineate the spread of culture and to demonstrate the value of its present composite form, so that our people may not be led away by the false notion that whatever paraphernalia of civilization we possess does not go back to more

than a century and a half. Indian civilization, with its real and inherent unity in the midst of its outward diversity, is age-long and not a mere graft, and this is one of the great and abiding results of the events which go to form the history of India.

Mr. Jaffar has stressed the right point when he describes how the people began to drink at the fountain of knowledge without regard to their rank or religion, and education, once the monopoly of the chosen few, nearly ceased to have any barriers round it. It was not merely instruction in the traditional Reading, Writing and Arithmetic which was imparted, but the magnificent monuments of the Age, the wonderful technique of apparel, wood and metal-ware, the great precision in the execution of public monuments, the abundance not only in commodities but in the monetary wealth as well which went to purchase them, the strides taken in the arts of war as well as of peace—all these things lead one to estimate, in however meagre a manner, the great progress made in the equipment of the people, high and low, with the right kind of vocational and technical knowledge.

I am very glad to find that Mr. Jaffar has brought out these and many other equally important and attractive traits in his valuable

work by tapping the information contained in the contemporary chronicles and has thus filled a long-felt want. I am sure that the book will be of great use to the student of Indian history as well as to the general reader, and trust that it will receive the recognition it so fully deserves.

Osmania University,  
HYDERABAD, DECCAN.

H. K. SHERWANI



# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### GENERAL FEATURES

" Acquire knowledge because he who acquires it in the way of the Lord, performs an act of piety ; who speaks of it, praises the Lord ; who seeks it, adores God ; who dispenses instruction in it, bestows alms ; and who imparts it to its fitting objects, performs an act of devotion to God. Knowledge enables its possessor to distinguish what is forbidden from what is not ; it lights the way to heaven, it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when bereft of friends ; it guides us to happiness ; it sustains us in misery ; it is our ornament in the company of friends ; it serves as an armour against our enemies. With knowledge the servant of God rises to the heights of goodness and to a noble position, associates with sovereigns in this world, and attains to the perfection of happiness in the next." 1

—Muhammad.

ISLAM attaches immense importance to the acquisition and extension of *ilm* or knowledge, which, with all its scholastic appurtenances involved in the study of the *Qur'ān*, the *Ahadith* and other sciences, is the only road to the apprehension of truth. The plea of ignorance does not weigh with it because it is often used as a subterfuge. *Apropos* of it there are recurring passages in the *Qur'ān*. The *Sūrah-i-Iqrā*,<sup>2</sup> the first revealed version of this Holy Book, opens with

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1. *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, Chapter IX, p. 360.  
 2. *Al-Qur'ān*, Chapter XCVI. This *sūrah* is also known as '*Al-alaq*'.

an injunction addressed to the Prophet to 'read', and the place assigned to education in Islam can be best appreciated in the light of importance attached to ink, pen and paper,—the three indispensable instruments of acquiring and extending knowledge. The same *sūrah* is also partially devoted to the art of writing and its indispensability as a means to the same end.<sup>3</sup> Besides, there are numerous Traditions (*Ahadith*) treating of the subject and enjoining it as a religious duty.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, it should not occasion surprise if the votaries of Islam have always held learning and erudition in honour verging on veneration. With such an attitude towards knowledge, Islam has immeasurably contributed to the wisdom of the world and the science of humanity. For the achievements of Islam in the realm of letters, the reader is requested to refer to the histories of Ibn-i-Khaldun, Ibn-ul-Athir and a host of historians whose accounts exhibit the height of civilization to which the Musalmans had attained.<sup>5</sup> Suffice

3. *Ibid.*, Chapter XCVI; and *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, p. 361.

4. For the sayings of the Prophet on the subject of knowledge, *vide Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, pp. 360-62, and *Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad*, by Abdul Fadl, Nos. 149-50, 410-16, 418, 423-25, 427-30, 432-34, 462, 525, 764, 772, 776, 812, 858, 952, 1017 and 1062.

5. For the literary and scientific spirit of Islam, see *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, Chapter IX, pp. 360-404.



it to say here that while the whole world was sunk in barbaric ignorance, Baghdad, Cairo, Cordova, Damascus, Kairowan, Nishapur and Seville reared their heads, shone as beacons and shed their light far and wide, illuminating the West as well as the East, then steeped in the darkness of ignorance.<sup>6</sup>

In India, the sons of Islam, remotely removed as they were from the rest of the Muslim World, could not keep pace with their brothers outside in material as well as in intellectual advance. Consequently, their attainments in education were not as high as may be expected; yet considering the conditions of the newly conquered country and the difficulties they had to face there, they did very well indeed. Many of them were noted for their love of learning and patronage of letters. Some of them devoted themselves exclusively to the acquisition and extension of knowledge. They did not marry because marriage, they thought, obstructed their progress in education. Their self-abnegation and self-effacement in the cause of learning have few parallels in the whole history of education. Hazrat Shaikh Isa Dehlawi, for instance, 'expressed his last

Importance attached to education in Muslim India.

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6. An account of these universities will be found in Amir Ali's *Short History of the Saracens*, pp. 205-207, 459, 460 and 517; and *Encyclopædia Britannica* (12th edition).

wish that he should be buried in the place where the students of his *madrasah* used to keep their shoes'.<sup>7</sup> In short, learning was held in high esteem and the learned were loved and respected all over the country. The State also encouraged them in every possible way. Judges, lawyers and ministers of religion were taken from their class. The appointment was made by a board of examiners, who were the distinguished members of their class, best suited to ascertain the learning and suitability of a candidate, who, if declared successful, was formally invested by them with his new character by tying an *imāmah* (turban) round his head.<sup>8</sup>

It may also be said at the outset that our **Social status of the teaching class.** old Indian teachers had a great respect for their calling. They would not do anything which might reflect badly on their character and profession. Their integrity was absolutely unshakable. They occupied a high position in society and, though their emoluments were small, they commanded universal respect and confidence. The spiritual force of their character could not be doubted and the efficacy of their

7. *Tazkirat-ul-Ulama*, translated by Sana-Ullah Khan, p. 27.

8. M. Elphinstone's *History of India*, p. 421.

teaching was such as was never called in question. They were very much like the German teachers of to-day.<sup>9</sup>

There existed a most affectionate relation between the teacher and his pupils. They often resided together in constant intellectual communion, and even when this was not so, the pupils were always in close contact with their teachers. Their relation was like that of father and son. That this was exactly so, is proved by the fact that no regular fee was charged and that the students were often provided with board and lodging free by their teachers. Profound respect and, sometimes, personal service were expected from the pupils, and the teachers, in return, regarded it their moral duty to equip their pupils with all that was essential for their moral and material improvement.<sup>10</sup>

Intimately allied to the relationship between the teacher and the taught is the monitorial system, which also deserves a passing notice. More intelligent and advanced students were associated with their masters in the work of teaching. They were appointed as monitors

**Monitorial  
System.**

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9. Dr. Zia-ud-din Ahmad's article entitled 'Systems of Examinations' in *M. U. J.* (Vol. 1, 1932) pp. 303-304.

10. *Ancient Indian Education*, by Keay, pp. 178-180.

for the assistance of teachers in conducting the class, maintaining order and giving lessons. The monitorial system seems to have been devised by the Indian educators of old for solving the problem of teaching a large number of students at different stages of study at the same time. While the monitors thus helped their teachers a good deal in their work, they, in return, received good practical training in the art of teaching. The revival of this system is recommended by many on the ground that 'it will yield many excellent results,' and there is no doubt that it is worth a trial in India, where the younger students' respect for the older ones is very marked and this will, as a matter of course, prove useful in making the experiment a success.<sup>11</sup>

**Education incumbent upon every Muslim—man and woman.** The teachings of Islām are meant for all human beings. Muhammad recommended education as meritorious in the eyes of the Almighty and invited all and sundry to acquire it. To say or to suppose that the nobler sex was debarred from acquiring it, is wholly against the spirit of his teachings. He emphasized the acquisition of learning and made it compulsory for all the Faithful,—men as well as women. We know for certain that

11. *Ancient Indian Education*, by Keay, pp. 178-180.

Bibi Fatima, his own beloved daughter, was efficiently equipped with intellectual attainments. She used to participate in the discussions on the controversial question of Caliphate (Succession). It was undoubtedly on account of her extraordinary erudition that she was known by the honorific appellation of 'the Lady of the Light'. Zainab, Hamda, Hafsa, Al-Kalleyyeh, Safia, Maria<sup>12</sup> and many more whose names cannot be enumerated here for want of space, have all left an ineffaceable impress on the literature of their times. They have since been regarded as true models of womanhood, whose footsteps every woman should aspire to follow.<sup>13</sup>

In India, the daughters of Islam could not  
**State of female education in Muslim India.** rise to the standard of perfection their preceptors had

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12. *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, p. 393 and his *Short History of the Saracens*, p. 569.

13. Khalidā Edib Khānum, the Turkish educationist, novelist and historian, whose public lectures attracted large learned audiences during her short tour in India, is in fact their faithful follower. She is a living instance of what woman has achieved and is capable of achieving in the realm of letters in the wide world of Islam. She reminds the students of Islamic history of Shaikhā Shuhādā (otherwise known as Fakhr-un-Nisā or the 'Pride of womanhood' on account of her intellectual eminence) who flourished in the fifth century of the Muslim era and lectured publicly in the Cathedral Mosque of Baghdad on literature, rhetoric and poetry. Amongst the gallery of the great women of Islam, who have consecrated their sex by their virtues, she occupies a high place.



attained in *belles-lettres*, yet when allowance is made for the age they lived in and the circumstances that obtained then, it will be evident that they had made a fair advance in the sphere of intellect, and it will be wrong to suppose that their education was neglected. For the instruction of girls, there were separate schools, but usually they received their education in their own houses or in those of their teachers, living in close proximity. Sometimes learned men of advanced age and proved piety and often learned ladies of tried merits and school-mistresses were employed for the purpose. I must point out here that education was given to girls according to their requirements. They received better moral, intellectual and practical training in their houses than their sisters of to-day do in the kind of schools now available. Consequently, there was no danger of their acquiring such desires as would have caused discontent and discord later on and resulted in their moral as well as spiritual bankruptcy.<sup>14</sup>

14. Obviously enough, I refer to unrestricted and promiscuous co-education above the age of ten, which, if encouraged or even allowed to continue, is bound to bring about the destruction of both the sexes. This is by no means to say that I am opposed to co-education in the primary stage up to the age of ten, with suitable safeguards and under healthy atmosphere.

In the Middle Ages no Government, however advanced, had a regular department of public instruction. In Muslim India, there was one, which looked after religious as well as educational institutions. There was hardly a prince of any importance whose name is not, in some way or the other, connected with the opening of a school or a college during his reign. From the evidence recorded in the ensuing pages, it will be amply clear that the Muslim Kings of Mediæval India opened schools and colleges and established libraries in the various parts of their dominions, and sought to supplement their educational achievements by extensive patronage of literary worth, from whatever sources it was evinced. At times, of course, the machinery of education was thrown out of gear, but such times were few and far between. On the other hand, there was a time, says a Hindu historian, when Indian Muslim universities were thronged by thousands of students and when a professor had often hundreds of hearers.<sup>15</sup> The streams of literary water, which flowed from these fountains of education, not only fertilized the soil, but supplied nourishment to the seeds of scholarship sown in it, and the result was a rich crop

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15. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 104 and 105.

of *litterateurs*, poets, *savants* and scholars.

The Muslim Sovereigns of India loved **Court Patronage and Private Patronage.** and remunerated personal homage done to them in the form of eulogistic prose or verse. It followed, therefore, that the ambition of every courtier was to become an author and of every author to become a courtier. Hence it was that almost every author of importance was, in a greater or less degree, attached to the Muslim Court, which was, in fact, the fountain-head of encouragement for literary fortune-hunters. Not that there were no poetry and prose, histories and sciences written outside this charmed circle; there were many poets and philosophers, pamphleteers and chroniclers who were setting down histories and descriptions and inditing some of those detailed and realistic dissertations and other compositions that elicit our praises in spite of ourselves. This was because authorship commanded great respect and led to honours and emoluments.<sup>16</sup>

Arrangements were also made for the free **Gratuitous Education.** education of poor but promising students. Stipends and scholarships were granted to them for their

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16. *Making of India*, by A. Yusūf 'Ali, p. 86; and *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. IV, p. 408.



maintenance and no effort was spared to supply their material requirements. Often the State set up schools and orphanages, where the children of the poor and orphans received education free of charge, and not infrequently they were supported at schools and colleges by the princes and peers at their own expense. No distinction was made between the sons of the rich and of the poor, and this had indeed a great unifying influence.<sup>17</sup>

Salaried teachers and paid professors were employed in state schools and seminaries. Vast endowments were created and large estates were set apart for the maintenance of educational institutions. In the schools that were held in private houses, the teachers, as a point of honour, taught their pupils without receiving anything, except personal service, as remuneration. The Village School-Master was paid his fees in kind and was, no doubt, a fair prototype of the *Village School-Master* portrayed by Goldsmith in his *Deserted Village*.<sup>18</sup>

It must, however, be pointed out here that the progress of education was much hampered in

**Absence of the printing press.**

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17. Vide Professor Gulshan Rai's article on *Our Educational Problems—II* in the *Tribune*, dated 4th August, 1935.

18. *Indian Administration*, by V. G. Kale, p. 432.

those days on account of the absence of the printing press. Consequently, books had to be written by hand. So, there were *amanuenses*, employed specially for the purpose. Numerous libraries, containing innumerable manuscripts in fine handwriting, were established and endowed. Not a few of the original works have come down to us to testify to the successful cultivation of calligraphy. Good handwriting was greatly valued; it was an essential constituent of a literary man's accomplishments. Though it is now quite out of fashion, it was regarded as an important fine art in those Days. Letter-writing and penmanship were equally highly prized in Muslim India.<sup>19</sup>

Nor was scholastic learning alone cultivated. For the successful cultivation of such fine arts as painting and music, students went to the houses of their chosen *ustāds*, or teachers, sat at their feet and received instruction in these arts. Technical training, or vocational knowledge, was diffused by the system of apprenticeship. There were thousands of

19. Sir Abdul Qadir's lecture on *The Cultural Influences of Islām in India*, published in *J. R. S. A.*, 10th January, 1936; *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. IV, p. 408; and *Making of India*, by A. Yusuf Ali, p. 87.

*karkhānās* or workshops, wherein boys were often apprenticed with the artisans to the trade for receiving instruction in particular arts and crafts.<sup>20</sup>

Commercial education was also imparted with a view to provide scientific training in the structure of industry and commerce for those contemplating business careers. The trading-classes maintained their own schools for the training of their children in the rudiments of the three R's and made arrangements for the promotion of their knowledge in business and accounts. Even at this distant date, such schools are commonly extant in India.<sup>21</sup>

Before the advent of Islam in India, knowledge was the monopoly of the favoured few, *viz.*, the Brahmins, who, partly from motives of self-aggrandizement and partly because they thought it would not answer to cast pearls before swine, refused to impart education to the low-born.<sup>22</sup> With the

20. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. IV, p. 436.

21. *Indian Administration*, by V. G. Kale, p. 432.

22. Going according to the principle of social divisions of Priests, Warriors, Merchants, and Workers,—each forming a water-tight compartment,—knowledge was, even in the best days of Hindu ascendancy, an exclusive monopoly of the Brahmins. Here by knowledge is meant spiritual knowledge or sacred lore, which the Brahmins had preserved or reserved for themselves and to which none but they could have free access. Though against this there was a revolt, not

advent of Islam, however, this superciliousness was shaken off and education became the birth-right of every citizen—Muslim and Hindu, man and woman, rich and poor. In the Muslim schools that were started in India, Hindus, who had hitherto been deprived of the intellectual feast, began to receive education side by side with their Muslim class-fellows, and there existed no feelings of prejudice, ill-will or enmity between the two in so far as education was concerned<sup>23</sup>—a circumstance peculiar only to Islamic Governments, whether in India, Spain or elsewhere, which unequivocally facilitated the fusion of the rulers and the ruled into one nation. Apart from imparting education to the sons of the subject people in the same schools side by side with the sons of the ruling class, the State, during the Muslim Period, went even so far as to maintain private schools held by *Brahmins* and *Mahants*.

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only individual or isolated, as the stories in some of the *purānās* and *Epics* would show, but also organized and persistent, as the outbreak of Buddhism and Jainism would indicate; yet after the decline of these two religions the same order of things obtained, so that when Islam appeared in India, it had to face and fight the same old spirit. I am not ignorant of the universities of Taxila, Nalanda, etc., but my point is that mass education was unknown to Hindu India for a long time. While as regards arts and crafts, the Brahmins were, I should say, positively backward as compared to other sections of Hindu community. (*Vide* Keay's *Ancient Indian Education*, pp. 68, 69 and 159.)

23. *India and Her People*, by Swami Abhedananda, p. 188.

There was a separate department of the State, which looked after the endowments created and set apart for the maintenance of religious and educational institutions, and this department looked after them.<sup>24</sup>

**Cultivation of Sanskrit.** The ban that had been put by the Brahmins on the cultivation of Sanskrit was removed by the Muslim Kings and Chiefs to an appreciable extent. Under the Imperial patronage, several Sanskrit books, dealing with diverse subjects, were translated into Persian and Arabic. Besides, there were scores of Muslim Chiefs who themselves studied Sanskrit and patronized it without stint. Many of them translated Sanskrit works into Persian in order to put the treasures of Hindu lore within the reach of the Muslim World, and encouraged others in this direction. Often Sanskrit works were included in the courses of study for Hindu students. In short, Sanskrit was encouraged in every possible way.<sup>25</sup>

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24. Professor Gulshan Rai's article 'Our Educational Problems—II' in the *Tribune*, dated 4th August, 1935.

25. In his article on 'Education in Muslim India', Dr. James H. Cousins writes as follows :—

"Muselman kings and princes themselves became students, and included Hindu culture in their intellectual interests. Muslim literary education intermingled as freely with Hindu literature as Mughal painting with Rajput painting. Hindu classics were translated into Persian, and as a consequence Persian culture influenced Hindu culture ...." (*The Eastern Times*, dated 7th June 1935.)



## CHAPTER II

# SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

**" Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave."**  
—*Muhammad.*

**Introductory.** IN Islamic times education was diffused in this country by the three-fold means of *maktabs* and *madrasahs*, mosques and monasteries, and private houses, typifying three forms of education, *viz.* : (1) university or higher education with under-graduate and post-graduate courses ; (2) secondary education, which obtained in grammar schools, high schools and private academies ; and (3) primary education imparting elementary knowledge. As apart from these regular instruments of imparting instruction, the ends of education were achieved in another unostentatious and unconventional way, which had no mean share in the dissemination of knowledge. It was common that those who could read would read aloud and others who could not read would listen with avidity, and discussions followed on the topics raised between the educated, armed with information based on books on one side, and the illiterate equipped with accumulated experience on the

other. The result was that they obtained a better and broader view of topical subjects from those discussions than many of us do by reading only one side of the subject in our favourite papers. And, it was not uncommon for an '*allāma* (scholar) or a *muballigh* (preacher) who, whether commissioned by a king or by his own conscience, came to deliver a lecture or a sermon, to attract large audiences; the people, high and low, old and young, clustered round him and attentively listened to his instructive discourse. *Mushā-eras* or poetical symposiums were frequently held and they, in their own way, contributed a good deal to the same cause.

About the higher education of Musalmāns during the Muslim Period, we have the following account from the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*:—

“In former times the higher education of Muhammadans was in the hands of men of learning who devoted themselves to the instruction of youth. Schools were attached to mosques and shrines and supported by state grants in cash or land, or by private liberality. Individual instructors of merit were also aided by the state, and land-holders and nobles vied with each other in supporting scholars of repute. Several towns in India, such as Gopāmāu and Khairābād in

**Higher Education.**

Oudh, and Jaunpur in the Province of Agrā, have from time to time been famous seats of learning to which students flocked from all parts of India, and even from Afghānistān and Bokhārā, to attend the lectures of renowned specialists. The course of study in a Muhammadan place of learning included grammar, rhetoric, logic, theology, metaphysics, literature, jurisprudence, and science. The classes of the learned instructors have been replaced by *madrasas* or colleges of a more modern type founded by the liberality of pious persons."<sup>1</sup>

Generally speaking, secondary education was imparted in mosques and monasteries. Almost all mosques, like the churches of Mediæval Europe, provided for religious as well as secular education. Likewise Muslim *khānqāhs*, analogous to the monasteries of Mediæval Europe, made provision for education which was mostly religious. The *dargāhs* or shrines,

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1. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. IV, p. 408. Whereas the Jāmi'a Osmānia (Osmānia University) of Hyderābād Deccan is a replica of those universities which were founded and endowed by the State, and the Nizām, a prototype of the Imperial educationists of those times; the Jāmi'a Millia (National Muslim University) of Delhi represents the type of educational institutions which owed their origin and existence to voluntary efforts, and the Shaikh-ul-Hind (Māhmud-ul-Hassan) is a true representative of the then voluntary zealots in the cause of education.



which are to be seen all over India, are the tombs of celebrated saints known as *dervishes*, who, on account of their profound knowledge, were loved and respected by the people as their *Murshids* or spiritual preceptors. One of the most renowned of these saint-scholars was Shāh Nizām-ud-Din Auliya who hailed from Ghaznin and is buried in the neighbourhood of Delhi, where he lived for a long time and died in 1325 A. C. in the reign of Sultān Alā-ud-Din *Khilji*, who was his disciple. Another such *savant* was Muin-ud-Din Chishti, who seems to have preceded Nizām-ud-Din Auliya. Muin died at Ajmere in 1265 A. C. and since then his tomb has been a resort of many pilgrims. The doctrines he preached, received sufficient support, three centuries later, from Salim Chishti, who found in Emperor Akbar a faithful friend, a proud patron and a devoted disciple. These and many others of their class established, during their lifetime, *khānqāhs*, where they held schools, in which religious education was imparted and mystic ideas preached. Such centres of education supplemented very substantially the educational work done by *maktabs* and *madrasahs* established by the State.<sup>2</sup>

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2. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 19 and 117 ; *Indian Administration*, by V. G. Kale, p. 432 ; and *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, pp. 471-72.

Elementary education was imparted in primary schools and private houses. The method of teaching in vogue was very simple and much the same as now. A novice was first taught the alphabet with correct pronunciation, punctuation and signs of accents.<sup>3</sup> After learning this, he was taught their combinations and then made to read and write short sentences in which those combinations most frequently occurred. He was given some exercises daily, which he read and wrote on his *takhti* (oblong board) and gradually learnt the art of reading and writing. Having thus equipped himself with the necessary means of acquiring knowledge, he could, if he would, proceed to study various arts and sciences in schools and colleges under the tuition of learned professors and doctors. The method of teaching was much improved in the reign of Akbar the Great under the direction of Allāma Abul Fazal.<sup>4</sup>

The medium of instruction was Persian, the language of the Muslim Court; and the study of Arabic, the language of the *Qur'ān*, was

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3. Subsequent to the alphabet, or sometimes simultaneously with it, he was taught the numerals and elementary arithmetic.

4. See Method of Teaching, Chapter V in this book.

compulsory for the Musalmāns. The *Qur'an* was, as it is now and shall continue to be, the first school in which the sons and daughters of Islām received their early education. Students used to sit cross-legged on floors or on benches with books in their hands, and learnt lessons from their teachers, who used to sit on pulpits or stand before their pupils, dispensing instruction in various arts and sciences. In the elementary schools, the children learnt to write with reed pens or with tubes of some other kind on oblong boards called *takhtis*, 'in appearance like a large edition of the horn-book, which could be washed clean at the close of the lesson'.<sup>5</sup>

In the primary stage the curriculum, comprised Reading, Writing and elementary Arithmetic, and in the secondary and higher stages it included the following branches of knowledge:—ethics, divinity, astronomy, the art of administration, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, physics, medicine, natural philosophy, rhetoric, law, ritual, accounts, agriculture, economics, and history. For Hindus, their own national books were prescribed.<sup>6</sup> They were

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5. *Hindustan in Miniature*, by Shoberl, Vol. IV, pp 215-16; and the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. IV, p. 408

6. *Ibid.*; *India and Her People*, by S. Abhedananda, pp. 188-89; *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law,

taught on the same level with Muslims, and in their own culture. Though the curriculum described above was not uniformly followed in the various Indian Muslim universities, yet most of the subjects enumerated above were taught to the students. No subject was forcibly thrust upon them. They had their own choice in the selection of their subjects, and they received their education according to their own future aims and ambitions. As a result, there was little waste of time and talent. It is also interesting to note that vocational studies, such as agriculture and accountancy, were also embraced by the curriculum. The inclusion of the art of administration in the course of study is significant. It shows that the subject was not exclusively meant for the princes of the royal family, as emphasized in the *Arthāśāstrās*, but was taught to the delegate governors and even to the governed for their association in every branch of administration with a view, perhaps, to the progressive realization of responsible government. The subject moved from the princely specialization of the *Arthāśāstrās* towards the participation of the people at large, has attracted the attention of the present rulers of India, and will undoubtedly

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pp. 161-62. ; Dr. J. H. Cousin's article in the *Eastern Times*, dated 7th June, 1935 ; and Ain 25 of the *Ain-i-Akbari*.

move into the future which is still before us.<sup>7</sup>

On the mental side of the Muslim curriculum, science seems to have received greater attention than philosophy; but the mental needs of man were not ignored. Arts and crafts were taught in separate schools because they were not included in the collegiate curriculum. The separation seems to imply that the artisans and craftsmen did not require to be informed or have their mental powers developed and disciplined, and that they needed only practical training which was given through apprenticeship. Education even in this age, at its most advanced stage, is not free from the same implication.<sup>8</sup>

Unlike to-day, examinations were not the be-all and the end-all of all education. There was no mania for degrees and diplomas such as now prevails. This was because education was for its own sake and for the sake of self-improvement. It was not fettered with formalities and was free from such 'soul-destroying standardization' as exists to-day in India. There was no time-limit for passing certain examinations, and there were not so

7. Dr. J. H. Cousin's article in the *Eastern Times*, dated 7th June, 1935.

8. *Ibid.*



many examinations as now. There was only one efficiency test which was free from all the formalities of the examination test, which every student in modern Indian schools must undergo. For instance, a student, who answers three out of every five questions incorrectly, is declared successful and is placed in the second class. Such a one would have been condemned by the old Indian schools and his teacher must have taken every care to make up his deficiency. There were no monthly, terminal and annual examinations, and students were not examined year after year for promotion to a higher class in schools and colleges. There were no question-papers, answer-books, marking of papers set by one and examined by another. The teacher-in-charge himself conducted the examination of his class and promoted the successful students to the next higher step in the ladder of education. Apart from *sanads* or certificates, stipends or scholarships, *ināms* (prizes) and *tanghās* (medals) were awarded to the brilliant *alumni* in proportion to their merits. In short, the system of examination in vogue was simple, less showy, more successful. A remnant of it still survives at the educational institutions which have resisted the interference of Government Education Departments, and can now be compared with the system of

examination now in force in Germany.<sup>9</sup>

This is so far as academic examinations are concerned. As regards **Public Tests.** those public tests and courtly rivalries, which used to provide on grand occasions no small interest, entertainment and instruction to the most magnificent Courts, it is not difficult to estimate their educative value. Rich rewards and precious presents of the princes afforded great stimulus to poets and scholars who emulated one another in literary excellence. *Mushā'eras* or poetical symposiums were held at the Imperial Court where prominent poets, invited from all parts of the country, enlightened the assemblage with their compositions in poetry. There the ability of the poets was put to real test and there they were given their weight in gold or silver, which developed the spirit of competition among them and led to the progress of poetry. And, the conferment of the title of *Malak-ush-Shu arā* or Poet-laureate, with all the importance and dignity it carried with it, on the best poet of the day, had a lure that was irresistible.

9. Dr. Zia's article 'Systems of Examinations' in the *Muslim University Journal*, Vol. I, p. 304; Brigg's translation of *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. IV, p. 365; *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. VI, pp. 487 ff.; and *Promotion of Learning in India* by N. N. Law, pp. 99 ff

**System of Punishment.** Punishments inflicted on students in those days at the primary stage were pretty much the same as are meted out to their brothers in the Indian schools of to-day. Truants and delinquents were caned, on their hands and slapped on their faces. But a more common punishment was, perhaps, to make them hold their ears by taking their hands from under their thighs while sitting on their tiptoes. *Korah* or whip was also used and custom permitted the teacher to punish his students in any other way his ingenuity might devise.<sup>10</sup>

**Aims and ideals of education in other countries.** The educational policy of every people, in every country and in every age has been framed by its educationists with a particular aim in view. In some countries the aim of their educationists has been to form and organize an independent nation ; in others, to foster the spirit of patriotism. In order to achieve their objects, they arranged public lectures and included such books in the syllabuses of schools and colleges as would best serve their purpose. In France, for instance, when the Republican Government took over from the Church the function of education, they thought that the

10. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. IV, p. 409.



real aim of education was to produce free men. The entire scheme of education in Republican France was therefore framed with free dom as its first and foremost aim. 'Liberty, equality and fraternity'—the new ideal of the French nation—became the sheet-anchor of the French System of Education. Soon after her defeat at the battle of Jena in 1802 A. C. at the hands of Napoleon, Germany evolved out a system of education at once in accordance with the needs of the nation. Patriotism became the principal aim of the German System and the love of the Fatherland was fostered through it in every possible way. Japan has successfully imitated Germany in constructing its educational system and has achieved much in almost every sphere of human endeavour. It cannot therefore be gainsaid that these and many other countries have risen chiefly through their new educational systems, which they have constructed in accordance with their present requirements. To education they owe their greatness and glory, and upon education depends their future success.

**Aims and objectives of education in Muslim India.**

In the spiritually-minded countries of the East, the chief aim of education has been to produce religious men. In Muslim India, it was to bring out the latent faculties of students, to

discipline the forces of their intellect and to equip them with all that was essential for their moral and material improvement. It was, in other words, the formation of character. Education was regarded as a preparation for life and for life after death. Hence it was that religion was at the root of all study: Every *maktab* and *madrasah* had a mosque attached to it, and in every mosque there were separate classes for the instruction of students in sciences other than religious, so that secular education might go hand in hand with religious instruction. The curriculum embodied in a previous paragraph is amply illustrative of this point. The fact that the rulers and the ruled received their education together without any racial or religious antagonism, that the curriculum embraced the national literature of both Muslims and Hindus, that the art of administration was taught to all and sundry and every one was eligible to compete for the highest post next only to the Emperor's, and that there was no distinction between the sons of the rich and of the poor in their educational career—shows that the formation of a nation was also aimed at. The Indo-Islamic System of Education embodied in it the germs of the German, the Japanese and the French Systems of Education. It was at its most perfect development

in the reign of Akbar the Great, who sought to unite the peoples of India in every possible way, no less through education.

**Aim of Present  
System of  
Education.** Here I do not propose to expose the defects of the Modern System of Education in India, but I cannot help sounding a word of warning to our educationists, because it is my sincere belief that India cannot make her way in the world unless and until her educational system is remodelled on rational, or rather, national lines. Education has now descended from its high pedestal of glory to a commonplace level and its aim is no longer the same as it used to be. A boy is sent to school, not because his parents want to make him a man of learning and character or a useful citizen, but because they regard education as a means whereby their son can secure a good station in life. It is thus clear that from being an end in itself, education has now become a means to an end—an end at once selfish and ignoble, which, moreover, is not easy to achieve, so much so that the tendency of education in India at present is to produce learned beggars and literate *coolies*. Religion, the backbone of Indian culture and civilization, was once the root of all study, but does not find place in the curricula of modern Indian schools and colleges. This, in short, accounts for the

wholesale demoralization of the people.<sup>11</sup>

In other respects, the quality of education imparted in Muslim India may be fairly estimated by putting the *elite* of that age side by side with those of the modern age, and comparing the achievements of both, making, at the same time, due allowance for the time that has since elapsed. In the absence of statistics, I cannot, I must acknowledge at the outset, give any definite figure of the literate of Muslim India, nor can I draw any comparison between that age and the educated India of to-day. Though the systematic diffusion of education in India on such a scale is a feature of the last fifty years, yet at no time during the eight centuries of the Muslim Rule was the subject of education ever relegated to the background. To the modern mind, however, the system of

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11. "Education should not only build man's mind out, also his character, and should not demoralize the people. The standardisation of education in India which exists to-day is soul-destroying" — said the Right Reverend E.H. M. Waller, Bishop of Madras, in the course of his stirring speech at the Secunderābād Y. M. C. A. He denounced the Modern System of Education on the ground that it was divorced from religion and did not build character. The real aim of education, he said, was the formation of character. Looked at from this angle of vision, the kind of education imparted in Muslim India was quite up to the mark, (*Vide Eastern Times*, dated 23rd March, 1935). For other faults and failures of the Modern System of Education, *Vide Peoples and Problems of India*, by Sir T. W. Holderness pp. 224 ff.

education then in vogue may appear to be inferior and even inadequate; it was, nevertheless, best-suited to the conditions of the country and the requirements of the students. It was free from much that has tarnished the Modern System of Education. It produced real scholars who were devoted to the study of truth. On the whole, there is a good ground for the general belief that the scholars turned out by old Indian schools were more thorough, and that the knowledge possessed by the matriculates and graduates manufactured by modern Indian universities is superficial and defective.<sup>12</sup> At present the statistical results may be highly impressive, but the fact, or rather the defect, that the real educative effect is absent, is also patent to the naked eye.

**Extent of Education.** From the evidence recorded in the ensuing pages it will be evident that universities were established in principal cities, and schools were opened in smaller towns both by Kings, *Amirs* and others. Likewise mosques and monasteries were founded and endowed in almost all parts of Muslim India, and these became a valuable asset to education in general. Their importance as centres of both spiritual and secular learning

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12. Dr. Zia's article on "Systems of Examinations" in the *Muslim University Journal*, (1932) Vol. 1, p. 303.



cannot be exaggerated. They were not strictly limited to '*ibādat*, i.e. divine worship. On the other hand, they were often availed of by scholars and *savants* for the recitation of their books. They were also used for lecture-halls and schools. Almost every mosque of importance had, as I have said before, a school and a library attached to it. *Khānqāhs* or shrines played a similar part in the dissemination of knowledge, both religious and general. A *khānqāh* commenced its career first as the centre of an order and then the oratory of its founder, who was buried there after his death. Like mosque, it was used as a place of instruction. The chief instance is the *Khānqāh* of Nizām-ud-Din Auliā.<sup>13</sup> These *khānqāhs* were numerous, but more numerous were mosques. No city, town or village, however small, was without them, and often there were several mosques even in a single village, and many in cities and towns. From all that has been stated above as a summary of what will presently follow, the reader can roughly work out, with the aid of imagination, the number of schools and gauge the extent of education in Muslim India.

13. For an account of mosques as places of '*ibādat* and instruction, each containing a school and a library, *vide* *Mohammadanism* by D. S. Margoliouth, p. 117 ; and for that of *khānqāhs* used as such, see *Spirit of Islam* by Amir Ali pp. 471-72.



**Results and achievements of the system of instruction then in force.** The results of the system of education as typified in the enduring achievements of those who benefited by it. also form an important part of this thesis and should not, therefore, be omitted. From amongst the countless scholars of various reigns and periods, I have singled out only some and outlined their achievements, which would give the reader some idea of the kind of education they had received. but my main point is that there could not have been such a rich crop of poets and philosophers, historians and others without there being some system of general education in existence. Great scholars do not, by themselves, spring up all over the country like mushrooms; they indicate the existence of a strong background of good average education from which they stood out like the peaks of a plateau. The most enduring achievement of the system of instruction in vogue at that time was the cultural unity of India. Hindus and Muslims studying side by side in the same state schools without any restrictions of rank, race or religion; compulsory education in Persian; cultivation of Sanskrit and Hindi; mutual exchange, adoption and incorporation of words, thoughts, and ideas—all these things combined and cumulatively contributed to the cultural unity of India during that period.

There were many Muslim scholars who studied Sanskrit and Hindi, wrote poetry and prose in these languages, and encouraged their cultivation. Likewise, there were several Hindus who cultivated Persian and Arabic and made their mark in the literature of these languages. Both the communities thus contributed to the language and literature of each other by enriching their vocabulary and enlightening the outlook of their votaries on life and letters. They devised a common medium of expression, Urdu, and developed it into a literary language. This had its natural result in the evolution of a common culture, which united them both and tended to bridge the gulf which existed between them on account of religious differences.<sup>14</sup>

14. See Chapter XIV of this book.

**PROGRESS OF EDUCATION—I**  
**COURT PATRONAGE**



## CHAPTER III

# PROGRESS OF EDUCATION DURING THE EARLY MUSLIM PERIOD

"Acquire knowledge even if it be in China."  
—*Muhammad.*

**Introductory.** HAVING described the system of instruction,—its methods and curricula, its aims and ideals, its extent and achievements, etc.,—I shall now proceed to trace the progress of education under the patronage of Muslim Kings and their Muslim subjects, and give a short account of the foundation and maintenance of educational institutions and the encouragement of men of learning and accomplishments—which forms an integral part of this thesis. For the sake of clarity and convenience I have treated the subject under three main heads : (1) Court Patronage ; (2) Private Patronage ; and (3) Connected Topics.

To begin with the House of Ghaznin.<sup>1</sup>  
**University of Sultan Mahmud at Ghaznin.** With rare exceptions, the promotion of education was an object of great concern to the Ghazna-wide Princes, each of whom tried to outvie

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1. Same as Ghazna or Ghazni, the Capital of Sultan Mahmud situate in Afghānistān, 84 Miles, S. S. W. of Kābul.

the other in his encouragement of letters. Sultān Māhmud and his successors were surrounded by a galaxy of literary stars. They opened schools and colleges in their kingdom, some of which are still famous in the annals of Islām. The university of Sultān Mahmud at Ghaznin, with a big library and a museum attached to it, stood as a lighthouse in Afghānistān, enlightening the life and thought of its inhabitants. But all this was, strictly speaking, outside India proper, mostly in Ghaznin and its dependencies.<sup>2</sup>

Sultān Shahāb-ud-Din of Ghor (or  
Muhammad Ghori) was the  
first Muslim King of India  
who deemed it his duty to  
impart education in India proper. Notwith-  
standing his political preoccupations which  
constantly occupied his attention, we know  
for certain, he devoted himself to the cause of  
education in India. At Ajmere he set up some  
schools and seminaries for the spread of

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2. A detailed account of the literary achievements of the Ghaznawides and their contributions to the cause of education will be found in:—(i) *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. II, pp. 63, 138, 139, 188, ff.; (ii) *Brigg's Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭa*, Vol. I, pp. 32, 61, ff., 113, 114, 137, 149, and 150; (iii) *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, Chapter I (The House of Ghazni).



Islamic culture and erudition in that province.<sup>3</sup>

Ferishta gives a graphic account of the work of private tuition undertaken by him to educate his slaves in whom he had seen the signs of their future greatness.<sup>4</sup> That some of these slaves and their sons supplied a series of capable rulers to India, is a glowing tribute to the interest he had taken in their education. One of them faithfully followed him in his footsteps and further increased the facilities for education in India, particularly in Bengāl and Bihār, where he opened some schools and colleges.<sup>5</sup>

Qutb-ud-Din Aibak, the founder of the Slave Dynasty in India, was thoroughly conversant with Arabic and Persian, and had some knowledge of science besides. He loved the learned and revered them with all his heart. In the various parts of his dominions, he established

**Education of his slaves.**

**Erection of mosques by Qutb-ud-Din.**

3. *History of India as told by its own Historians*. Elliot and Dowson. Vol. II p. 215.

4. Brigg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. I, p. 200. Mr. Law says that "in the instruction of these protégés of his he used to combine a literary education with a training in the difficult art of practical Government, which was essential to princes" (*Vide Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 18).

5. *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. II, pp. 306-309 and Raverty's *Translation of Tabqāt-i-Nāsiri*, p. 559-60; and Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 106.

numerous mosques in which, analogous to the churches of Mediæval Europe, secular learning went hand in hand with religious instruction.<sup>6</sup>

Altamash (Iltutmish) was a distinguished patron of letters. Scholars of the calibre of Amir Khusrau and Fakhr-ul-Mulk Usāmi flourished at his Court under his patronage. Amir Kuhāni, a philosopher of great reputation, was also among the stipendiaries who drew their sustenance from his coffers. The *Fatuhāt-i-Firoz Shāhi* ascribes to his efforts the erection of a *madrasah*. The original text is as follows:—

“The *Madrasan* of Shams-ud-Din Altamash had been destroyed. I rebuilt it and furnished it with sandal-wood doors.”—Firoz Shāh Tughluq.<sup>7</sup>

Sultāna Razia Begum, a cultured queen herself, she was not looked to in vain by the *litterateurs* of her time for encouragement. That she was in complete sympathy with the stimulation of

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6. “Muhammadian learning was promoted by the establishment of hundreds of mosques which like the churches of Mediæval Europe were centres of both religion and learning.” (*Vide Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 19.)

7. *History of India as told by its own Historians*. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. III, p. 383.

education is brought home to us by the existence of the Muizzi College, which was in a flourishing state during her reign. The college was located at Delhi and was so rich and magnificent that it was once attacked by the Karāmāthians who were under the impression that it was the *Jāmi-Masjid*.<sup>8</sup>

Nāsir-ud-Din occupies a prominent place in the educational history of Muslim India. Himself a man of scholarly disposition and sedentary habits, he greatly appreciated and freely rewarded scholarship. Consequently his court was a regular rendezvous of literary geniuses. Among those erudite persons who enjoyed his patronage, the most renowned was Minhāj-i-Sirāj, the well-known author of the *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri*.

During his reign there was a college at Jalandhar, wherein Balban, the Prime Minister, and his followers offered their *Id-uz-Zuhā* prayers on their way back to Delhi after a successful campaign.<sup>9</sup> It was probably he who founded the famous Nāsiriyya College, called after his name. The celebrated Minhāj-i-Sirāj was for some time the principal of this institution and

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8. Brigg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. I, p. 217: Raverty's *Translation of Tabqāt-i-Nāsiri*, pp. 637, 646.

9. Raverty's *Translation of Tabqāt-i-Nāsiri*, pp. 678, 679.

superintendent of its vast endowments.<sup>10</sup>

**Balban and his Court Scholars.** Ghiyās-ud-Din Balban continued with great vigour and wisdom the policy of his predecessors. He extended his support to all those men of letters who, blown out of their nests by the storm of Mughal invasions, took shelter at his Court, which at once became 'the most splendid and cultured all through Asia.' Amir Khusrau, Shaikh Usmān Tirmizi, Shaikh Badr-ud-Din Ārif, Amir Hasan, Sayyad Maulā, Shaikh Shakar Ganj, Bahā-ud-Din and Qutb-ud-Din Bakhtiyār may be mentioned among the honoured celebrities of the Court, basking in the Imperial sun.<sup>11</sup>

**Prince Muhammad, the pioneer of literary societies.** While Balban entertained his learned protégés, his son, Prince Muhammad, in the company of his scholar friends, indulged in philosophic discourses—thus giving a lead to the formation of literary societies, which under his initiative, honeycombed the whole kingdom in a short time and became a valuable

10. *Ibid.*, p. 667; and *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol II, p. 344.

11. "Spare no pains", said Balban to his officers, "to discover men of genius, learning and courage. You must cherish them by kindness and munificences that they may prove the soul of your councils and instruments of your authority." (*Vide Brigg's Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. I, pp. 251 ff.)

asset to education. 'The Court of the young prince,' says Barni, 'was frequented by the most learned, excellent and talented men of the age.' His palace was the meeting-place of his literary society, of which Amir Khusrau was the honoured president. There the merits of the most prominent poets were discussed by the learned members, and the *Shāhnāmāh*, the *Diwān-i-Khāqāni* and the *Diwān-i-Senāi* were regularly recited.<sup>12</sup>

Another society of a different type was founded by his brother, Prince Kurra Bughra Khan, founder of a dramatic society. Kurra Bughra Khān, the second son of Sultān Balban.

The members of this society included a multitude of musicians, dancers, actors and story-tellers, who frequently convened their meetings at the palace of their prince.<sup>13</sup> The example set by the Imperial House was followed by the nobility and the middle-class Musalmāns, with the result that within a brief spell of time numerous such societies sprang up in the Sultānate of Delhi and raised the standard of education so high that travellers from distant parts of the world were drawn

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12. *Ibid.*, pp. 252 and 258; *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. III., p. 565. Also see pp. 109 and 110.

13. Brigg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. I pp. 252 and 258.



towards it for the cultivation of literature, music and other arts.<sup>14</sup>

The establishment of the Khilji Imperialism in India was highly conducive to the cultivation of literary knowledge. It was in fact during the Khilji regime that the seeds of scholarship sown before were nurtured and a rich harvest reaped. Jalāl-ud-Din, the first king of the new dynasty, was a great lover of learning. He invited eminent *gens de lettres* to his private parties and listened to them with avidity. His unstinted bounty created an intellectual atmosphere in his court and carried his fame far and wide. Among those who wrote copiously on history, philosophy, poetry and other sciences under his auspices, were Amir Khusrau, 'the Prince of Poets' who never allowed a single party to take place without first preparing a new poem or a good song for the occasion ; Khwājah Hassan, Tāj-ud-Din Irāqi, Amir Arsalān, Saād-ud-Din Māntaqi, Ikhtiyār-ud-Din Yāghi, and Qāzi Muḡhis of Jhānsi. In addition to his other duties, Amir Khusrau was also in charge of the Imperial Library. The Sultān held him in high esteem and conferred upon

<sup>14.</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 252 and 258. Also see *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N N. Law, p. 25, and *Making of India*, by A. Yusuf Ali, pp. 87-88.

**Jalal-ud-Din and his contributions to the cause of education.**



him the honour of wearing white robes which the members of the Imperial House and the nobles of the highest order alone could wear.<sup>15</sup>

Alā-ud-Din, the nephew and successor of Jalāl-ud-Dīn, rose to the rank of an eminent educationist. The statement of Barni that 'he was unlettered and never associated with men of learning,' refers only to the early years of his reign, when he was not only indifferent but positively hostile to the peaceful cause of education; for the weight of evidence is in favour of the fact that subsequently he applied himself diligently to the study of Persian and succeeded in acquiring some proficiency in it.<sup>16</sup> And, when he found himself in a position to understand learned discourses and discursive conversations, he began to show favours to all men of eminence. Ferishta has given a list of those powerful intellectuals who were attracted to his Court from distant places and were the recipients of cordiality from him and honoraria from the State. According to him there were as

15. Briggs *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta* Vol. I, pp. 292 293 ; and *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. III, pp. 144 ff.

16. Briggs's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta* Vol. I, p. 348, and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 33.

many as forty-five doctors of arts and sciences who worked as professors in the universities ; whereas Abdul Haq Haqqi informs us that 'during the time of Sultān Alā-ud-din, Delhi was the great rendezvous for all the most learned and erudite personages ' Among them the names of Amir Khusrau, who wrote as many as ninety-nine works on various subjects ; Amir Hassan, the 'Saadi of Hindustan'; and Shams-ul-Mulk, the Prime Minister, shine out most conspicuously. The last-named was such a consummate scholar that he counted among his students several learned men of the reign.<sup>17</sup> The inscription on the southern doorway, or *Alāi Darwāzah*, describes the Sultān as 'the strengthener of the pulpits of learning and religion and the strengthener of the rules of Colleges and places of worship'.<sup>18</sup>

On his accession to the throne, Mubārik  
**Mubarik Shah**      Shāh Khilji restored to the  
**restores confiscated**      rightful claimants all those  
**property.**      lands and *jāgirs* which, in spite of their being  
the chief means of subsistence of literary  
fortune-hunters, had been confiscated by his

17. Brigg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferīshīa*, Vol. I, pp. 353 and 376 ; and *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 485.

18. *Archæology of Dehli*, by Carr Stephen, p. 56

predecessors. This obviously meant the resuscitation of many a moribund *madrasah*.<sup>19</sup>

The secularization of state property too often absorbed the endowments of schools and seminaries under 'Alā-ud-Din, so much so that many of them disappeared or continued a semi-starved existence with diminished funds. But it must not for a moment be supposed that education was being discouraged. On the other hand, the place of private schools was taken by state schools. Only such *jāgirs* and endowments were confiscated as had proved or tended to prove dangerous to the State.

Under the *ægis* of the House of Tughluq India began to wear a more brilliant literary aspect. Sultan Ghiyās-ud-Din's magnanimity of temper and urbanity of tastes were displayed in the generous treatment which he always meted out to men of genius and learning. Amir Khusrau, our familiar acquaintance in this chapter, resided at his court and received 1,000 *tānkās* a month from the State treasury. For guidance in the civil as well as military administration of his kingdom, he himself formulated a code of laws based on

**Secularization of State property and its effects on educational institutions.**

**Ghiyas-ud-Din : His literary activities and achievements.**

19. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 41

the *Qur'ān* and the traditional usages of the Sultanate of Delhi.<sup>20</sup> The isolated hillock, a mile beyond the walls of Tughlaqābād, called *Nāi-Ka-Qila* (Barber's Fort) is believed by some to have been a college originated by him.<sup>21</sup>

His successor, Muḥammad Shāh Tughluq, Muhammad  
Tughluq's  
attainments. was the most learned among the crowned heads of the Middle Ages.<sup>22</sup> He was thoroughly at home in almost all arts and sciences. His literary largesse attracted intellectual luminaries from far and wide. According to Professor Gibb, Ibn-Batuta, the famous Traveller of Islām, 'had already made up his mind to seek his fortune in India to which the boundless munificence of the reigning sovereign of Delhi was attracting numbers of scholars and theologians from other countries.'<sup>23</sup> A faithful and un-failing friend of the learned and genuinely interested in their well-being, he could not, unfortunately, contribute to the cause of

20. Briggs's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. I, pp 402 ; and *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. II, p. 318.

21. *Dehli Past and Present*, by Fanshawe, p. 291.

22. Briggs's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. I, p. 480 ; Vol. II, p. 285. *Voyages d' Ibn Batutāh*, Trans. Defremery, tom., pp. 290 ff. and *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol III, p. 580.

23. *Travels of Ibn Batuta*, translated by Gibb, Introduction, pp. 5 and 6.

education all that was expected from him, despite the piety and purity of his intentions. While dwelling on his literary achievements and the transfer of his capital, Mr. N. N. Law points out that 'it is not at all likely that the literary Sultān would build his capital without any suitable *madrasah* as its educational ornament, as Firoz Shāh, his successor, would do in his own Firozābād'.<sup>24</sup>

Among the Emperor-Sultāns there was none who endeavoured so much for the widespread diffusion of education in his kingdom as Firoz Shāh Tughluq, the cousin-successor of Sultān Muhammad Tughluq. As a keen student of history, he himself wrote an account of his reign, called *Fatuhāt-i-Firoz Shahi*. Of the host of historians who shone at his court, the most recognized were Sirāj 'Arif and Zia-ud-Din Barni. Among other scholars who thrived under his fostering care, Maulāna Jalāl-ud-Din Rumi,<sup>25</sup> Maulāna 'Alim Anandapati, Maulāna Khwājgi, Qāzi Abdul Qādir and Aziz-ud-Din Khālid Khāni stand out pre-eminent. They wrote on theology, Islamic jurisprudence, history, geography,

Scholars who thrived under the patronage of Firoz Shah.

24. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 47

25. Not the famous mystic poet of the same name, who flourished in the twelfth century and wrote the immortal *Masnawī*, known as the *Masnawī-i-Maulānā-i-Rum*.



philosophy and several other sciences.<sup>26</sup>

Education during the reign of Firoz Tughluq made mighty advances because the Sultān was an eminent educationist, who strove zealously for its propagation. His peaceful reign enabled him to organize a regular system of public instruction. No doubt, he patronized learning and encouraged men of letters, as had been done by his predecessors, but he sent out eminent teachers to reside in different parts of his dominions for the sake of imparting instruction to the people at large. This was undoubtedly a far-reaching reform in the department of education. It led to an extensive diffusion of education and produced a large number of capable scholars.<sup>27</sup>

He not only repaired and reconstructed old *madrasahs* which were in decadent condition, but built many new ones. According to the testimony of Ferishta and Nizām-ud-Din, he founded no less than thirty colleges in his kingdom and provided them with paid professors of proved merit; whereas Abdul Bāqi has

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26. Brigg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. I, p. 461 ; and *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson Vol. III, pp. 316, 317 and 343.

27. *Vide Making of India*, by A. Yusuf Ali, p. 81.



recorded in his *Ma'āsir-i-Rahimi* that he opened as many as fifty *madrasahs*. Though the number of the *madrasahs* he founded differs in different accounts, they were in no case less than thirty.<sup>28</sup>

Not the least remarkable of these institutions was the one called **His most magnificent madrasahs.** Firoz-Shāhi-Madrasah. A description of this *madrasah* indicates the ideal and inner life of an educational institution held by a Muslim King of the fourteenth century. It was a superb and spacious mansion, situated within well-planned gardens, containing separate apartments for the reception and entertainment of foreign celebrities, who paid it frequent visits. It was a residential college with suitable provisions for poor students and professors, who resided there in constant intellectual communion. It had a mosque and a reservoir attached to it. The mosque was famous for its bounty, which was enjoyed by the professors as well as students who lived there.<sup>29</sup> Another college, with a

28. *Vide History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. III, p. 338 ; Brigg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. I, pp. 464-465. Also see *Siyyār-ul-Mulūk*, by Ghulam Husain, Vol. I, p. 128 ; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 56 and 57.

29. See *Tārīkh-i-Firozshāhi*, by Zia Barni, pp. 562—566 ; *Archæology of Delhi*, by Carr Stephen, p. 83 ; *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol.

mosque and a tank attached to it, was founded by Firoz Shāh in the vicinity of the *Qadam Sharif* to perpetuate the memory of his beloved son, Fateh Khān, the heir-apparent to the throne.<sup>30</sup>

**Education of slaves as a function of Firoz Shah's Government.** An important item of state expenditure during the reign of Firoz Shāh was the education of slaves, in whose well-being the Sultān was deeply interested. There was a separate department of officers, maintained for their welfare, and a separate treasury, kept for their pensions and gratuities. They were as many as 180,000, and there was no art or craft in which they were not trained. At one time, we are informed, as many as twelve thousand slaves were turned into serious scholars, tradesmen and artisans.<sup>31</sup>

**Sayyad Kings' educational achievements.** The Sayyad Kings,—Khizr Khān and Mubārik Shah in particular,—were also interested in the promotion of education in their kingdom. Under them, there sprang into prominence

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III, p. 441 ; and Dr. J.H. Cousin's article in the *Eastern Times*, dated 7th June, 1935.

30. *Archæology of Delhi*, by Carr Stephen, p. 147 ; *Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi*, by Thomas, p. 298 ; and *Āsār-us-Sanādīd*, by Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan, p. 37.

31. *Tarikh-i-Hindustān*, by M. Zakauḷā, Vol. II, p. 208. *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. III, pp. 340-341 ; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 54 and 55.

two formerly obscure cities, *viz.*, Badāon and Cuttair, which for a while, successfully rivalled the cities of Delhi and Firozābād in their intellectual outlook. They contained mosques and *madrasahs* which supplemented very substantially the educational achievements of the two imperial cities named above. The following statement of Mr. Francklin in his *Shāh Alam* is significant enough :—

“In the ancient city of Badāon, many princes of the Pathan Dynasty kept their Courts for a series of years during the reign of that dynasty of Hindostan. There, as in many parts of Cuttair, are to be seen the remains of magnificent edifices, palaces, gardens, mosques, colleges and mausoleums.”<sup>30</sup>

Bahlol Lodhi, the founder of the Lodhi Dynasty, was an enlightened patron of letters. He valued the society of literary men and loved them above all his servants. Though the strain and stress of ceaseless warfare during his reign left him but little leisure to turn his mind to the arts of peace, yet he

**Bahlol Lodhi's interest in the education of his subjects.**

30. *Shāh 'Alam*, by Francklin, p. 57. Referring to the city of Badāun Mr. N. N. Law says that “within 100 miles of Delhi there had arisen another centre for diffusion of education, containing numerous colleges which supplemented the educational work of Delhi and Firozābād” (*Vide Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p 71).

did not lose sight of the fact that the promotion of education was a part of his duty as a king. It can be gathered from the *Ma'āsir-i-Rahimi* that he opened some schools and colleges in his kingdom for the moral as well as intellectual improvement of his subjects.<sup>31</sup>

Sultān Sikandar Lodhi was himself a poet of distinction, who composed verses under the pen-name of *Gulrukh*. Shāh Jalāl, a talented poet and author of the *Siyyār-ul-'Arifin*, was his preceptor in poetry. Abdullah, author of the *Tārikh-i-Dāudi*, informs us that 'seventeen accomplished and learned men of tried merit were constantly with him in his private apartments.' Among them were Sayyad Sadr-ud-Din of Kanauj, Miyān Abdur Rahmān of Sikri and Miyān Aziz-Ullāh of Sambhal.<sup>32</sup>

The same authority (*i.e.* Abdullāh) further states that this Sultān covered his kingdom with colleges and filled them with professors and

31. Brigg's *Translation of Ferishta*, Vol. I, p. 562 and *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. IV, p. 436; *Ma'āsir-i-Rahimi*, by Abdul Bāqi as quoted by Law in his *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 72.

32. Ranking's *Translation of Muntakhib-ut-Twārikh*, Vol. I, p. 429; Brigg's *Translation of Ferishta*, Vol. I, pp. 581, 587, 589; *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. IV., pp. 446 and 450.

students.<sup>33</sup> The testimony of Ferishta shows that education made much progress during his reign. He persistently insisted on the compulsory education of his military officers. This gave a new character to the profession of arms, which, as such, combined military training with literary instruction for the first time in Muslim history.<sup>34</sup>

Sultān Sikandar Lodhi also encouraged the study of *belles-lettres* in his dominions.<sup>35</sup> He gave a fresh impulse to the arts of writing, compilation and translation. Under his encouragement, standard literature of a very high order was produced. The learned physicians of India and outside put their heads together at his instance and compiled the *Tibb-i-Sikandari*, so-called after his own name.<sup>36</sup> The new compilation began to

**Progress of belles-lettres under his patronage.**

33. Brigg's *Translation of Ferishta*, Vol. I, pp. 581, 587, 589; *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. IV, p. 540.

34. Brigg's *Translation of Ferishta*, Vol. I, pp. 581, 587, 589; *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 73, 74.

35. *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. IV, pp. 446, 451.

36. Mr. N. N. Law asserts that the *Tibb-i-Sikandari* was translated from the *Argar-Mahābedak* (or the science of medicine and treatment of diseases). This patriotic assumption, I am sorry to say, lacks historical justification, since the book was not a direct translation of any complete work,



serve as the basis of the practice of many a well-to-do physician of India. We have it from the *Wāqiyāt-i-Mushtāqī* :—

“Miyān Budh succeeded to the late Khwāṣ Khān and was confirmed in the dignity. He got together fine calligraphists and learned men, and employed them in writing books on every science. He brought books from Khurāsān and gave them to learned and good men. Writers were continuously engaged in this work. He assembled the Physicians of Hind and Khurāsān, and, collecting books upon the science of medicine, he had a selection made. The book so compiled received the name of *Tibb-i-Sikandarī*, and there is no work of greater authority in India.”<sup>37</sup>

It will not be without some interest to mention here that Sultān Sikandar Lodhī, realizing the difficulty of governing his empire from his old capital, founded a new

**Appointment of  
Miyān Budh and his  
work.**

**Foundation of  
Agra and its growth  
into a university-  
city.**

as our friendly author erroneously supposes. It was, on the other hand, a compilation of a number of extracts selected from a number of books on the science of medicine, as seen above (*Vide Promotion of Learning in India* by N. N. Law. p. 77).

37. *History of India as told by its own Historians*. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. IV, p. 451.



city on the site where the modern city of Agra now stands, so that he might be able to exercise more effective control over the rebellious provincial governors and refractory fief-holders of Etāwa; Biyāna, Koel (Aligarh), Gwālīor and Dholpur, and shifted his capital to that place. The transfer of capital was fraught with far-reaching consequences. In course of time a splendid city sprang up on the selected site and took the name of Agra, which played a prominent part in shaping the destinies of India in her future history. Once founded, the new capital launched upon a career which was characterized by a rich efflorescence of learning and literature. It became a radiant centre of Islamic culture and civilization, and for some time threw into shade its sister city—Delhi—the Queen of Indian cities. There can be no doubt that Agra owed its grandeur to Sikandar, who founded it, beautified it with superb structures, including schools and colleges, and made it his capital. With the acquisition of the dignity of being the seat of Islamic Government in India, it began to draw towards itself the centre of gravity of the literary world, which had hitherto been at Delhi and Firozābād. Men of learning and erudition from Arabia, Persia and Bokhāra poured into it in ever-increasing numbers at the prospect of receiving better patronage

from the ruler of India, who was remarkable for his munificence. Wheedled out of their original homes by the favours of the reigning sovereign, these learned men took up their abode in the new capital, where they were granted lands and rewards by the State Officers in conformity with the Imperial *Firmāns*. The result was that in course of time Agra grew into a great university-city, containing several schools and colleges, where people flocked from far and wide for higher education.<sup>38</sup>

Again, in passing, it may be mentioned with propriety, that during the reign of Sikandar Lodhi the Hindus for the first time began to receive Persian education in the Muslim schools that were started. "The Hindus from the sixteenth century", says Blochmann, "took so zealously to Persian education that before another century had elapsed they had fully come up to the Muham-madans in point of literary acquirements." Ferishta strikes the same note when he says that 'the Hindus who had hitherto never learned Persian, commenced during this reign to study Muhammadan literature'.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *Vide Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. IV, p. 408.  
<sup>39</sup> Brigg's *Translation of Ferishta*, Vol. I, p. 587 : and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N.N. Law, pp. 75 and 76.

## CHAPTER IV

# PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN THE PROVINCIAL KINGDOMS

**"The seeker of knowledge will be greeted in  
Heaven with a welcome from the angels."¹**

*—Muhammad.*

**Introductory.** In the provincial kingdoms of the North as well as in the Shiāh States of the South there were many Governor-Sultāns, who vied with one another in patronizing learning and advancing education in their kingdoms. The breakdown of the Central Government left them a fair field for making their own contributions to the cause of learning, independently of the Delhi Sultāns. It should, however, be noted that the histories of many of these dependencies of Delhi as well as of independent kingdoms are mostly unchronicled, partly because they had no court-historians and partly because they rapidly changed hands. This accounts for the paucity of material and the consequent gaps that occur in between.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, p. 360.

2. Modern research has succeeded in rescuing from the past much that was thought to be irretrievably lost. It has restored some of the most regrettable *lacunæ* in Indian

Nasir-ud-Din Qabāicha, who ruled in  
 State of education in Sind under Nasir-ud-Din Qabāicha and Shah Beg Arghun. Sind about the beginning of the thirteenth century, and Shāh Beg Arghun, who was supreme there about the third decade of the sixteenth, were both exceedingly well-read. Whereas the former's court was an asylum of learned men who had been driven out of Ghaznin and Ghor, by the ruthless ravages of Chingez Khān, the latter was himself an author of many books and an encourager of those who had similar tastes and inclinations.<sup>3</sup>

Hussain Shāh Langha of Multān was a  
 In Multan under Hussain Shah Langha and Hussain Mirza. man of extraordinary learning and integrity. He actively patronized the best authors of the day, and during his time education received the lion's share of his attention. At his instance, several schools and seminaries were started and staffed with talented teachers. Under the circumstances, his Prime Minister was totally justified in boasting that Multān under him possessed a superior standard of

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history only so far as the names of the kings of these kingdoms and the duration of their reigns are concerned; but regarded as a record of cultural achievements and as a connected story of the growth and development of a nation, the history of these kingdoms is bound to remain sadly deficient

3. Brigg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. IV p. 432

education.<sup>4</sup> Hussain Mirza, the last of the Lāngha line, also seems to have done something in the way of advancing education in his kingdom. His devotion to learning may be judged by the encouragement he extended to scholarship. Among those attached to his court may be mentioned the names of at least two well-known scholars: Sa'ad-ullāh Lāhori and Maulāna Abdur Rāhmān Jāmi. The latter was a poet of supreme powers and singular endowments. On him the Muse had profusely showered her charms and graces. He claimed a large number of learned men as his pupils.<sup>5</sup>

Among the outlying provinces, there was none more fortunate than Jaunpur which became, under its Muslim rulers, a great university-city and continued as such for a fairly long time. Never in fact in the whole history of this province did the subject of education sway the hearts and the minds of its people quite as much as under the benevolent rule of Sultān Ibrāhim Sharki. It was in his reign that it received the honorific appellation of *Shirāz-i-Hind* (Shirāz of India)

**Jaunpur as an important centre of education under Ibrahim Sharki.**

4. *Ibid.*, p. 385. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 105.

5. *Ibid.*



on account of its eminence as an important centre of education, to which hundreds of men flocked from far and near for higher education. It produced men whose memory cannot easily die. Some of them were Shaikh Allāh-dād Jaunpuri, Zahir Dilāwari, Qāzi Shahāb-ud-Din Daulatābādi, Maulāna Ali Ahmad, Maulāna Hasan Baqshi and Nur-ul-Haq. The *Tazkirat-ul-Ulāmā* and the *Siyyār-ul-Mulk* agree in recording that there were hundreds of *madrasahs* in Jaunpur and that the teachers and the taught were awarded *tamghās* (medals) and *jāgirs* in recognition of their literary merits.<sup>6</sup>

A mention may also be made about the Court of Jaunpur. It welcomed, with open arms, all poets and scholars who proceeded there in search of encouragement; particularly did it receive most hospitably those ousted from their homes by the invasion of Amir Taimur. Justly did the chronicler record the following in support of the above view:—

“During Ibrāhim’s reign (1402-40), the Court of Jaunpur far outshone that of Delhi

6. Brigg’s *Translation of Tarikh-i-Ferishtā*, Vol. IV. p. 365. *History of India as told by its own historians*, by Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 487 ff., and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 99 ff.



and was the resort of all the learned men of the East.”<sup>7</sup>

All that has been said about Jaunpur as an *El Dorado* of learning in India has been beautifully summed up in the *Archæological Survey of India* by Mr. Furher as follows:—

“Warren Hasings may have visited the city (of Jaunpur), Sir Eyre Coote certainly did, while Duncan’s visit in 1788 is recorded in those volumes of Proceedings which are mouldering unnoticed on the record-shelves of the Commissioner and Collector of Benares. He writes too favourably of the site and laments the decay of the town, telling how it once was the seat of Muhammadan learning, and the residence of many of their learned men in so much that it was known by the appellation of the Shirāz of India. Though no trace be now left of the schools, but the story of their past fame, we have better ground than Mr. Duncan’s for saying that this city was the Shirāz or the Mediaeval Paris of India. Feroze (Tughluq) determined to make it a seat of learning worthy of his cousin’s fame. Each of the princes of Jaunpur prided himself

7. Quoted by Mr. Law from Lethbridge’s *Topography of the Mughal Empire* (Vide Law’s *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 100).

on patronizing science and the troubles which in the early part of the fourteenth century scattered the doctors of the ancient imperial city were eminently favourable to the rise of a school in the peaceful and secure Jaunpur. Even in Muhammad Shāh's time 20 famous schools existed in Jaunpur of which now but the names are known—the founder of the one having died in the middle of the fifteenth century, and another in the middle of the seventeenth century. Nor was scholastic learning only cultivated. Of the successful cultivation of the arts, let the noble *masjids* of Ibrāhim and Hussain bear witness.”<sup>8</sup>

Keenly impressed by the state of Muslim learning in India, Mr. N. N. Law thus concludes his account of the kingdom of Jaunpur:—

“Like Jaunpur many a great Muslim University has now ceased to exist, leaving behind only a memory of its former glory. The days are past when the Indian Musalman universities, as also those of Damascus Baghdād, Nishāpūr, Cairo, Kairawān, Seville, Cordova were thronged by thousands of students, when a professor had

**Decay of Indian Muslim universities for lack of patronage in later times.**

8. *Archæological Survey of India*, Fuhrer, Vol. I, pp. 21 and 22.

often hundreds of hearers, and when vast estates set apart for the purpose maintained both students and professors.”<sup>9</sup>

The disappearance of Indian Muslim universities of old is due to lack of encouragement in later times.

In point of educational facilities, the Kingdom of Mālwa was no less renowned. In the opinion of Ferishta it could compare and compete favourably with Shirāz and Samarqand, the renowned university-cities of the East. It contained many colleges, one of which stood at its capital in close proximity to the *Masjid* of Sultān Hushang Shāh. Its court received most hospitably, the many poets and philosophers, who, attracted by its bounty, proceeded there from different countries.<sup>10</sup>

A traveller, who visits to-day the site of Mālwa on a mountain plateau, sees nothing but a haunt of wild beasts. He seldom gives a thought to the remains of the royal *madrasahs* and other edifices, lying in a dilapidated condition, to realize that at one time the city was studded with schools and seminaries. Nevertheless,

9. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 104 and 105.

10. Sultān Māhmud Khilji was such a promoter of learning and advocate of education that Mālwa, during his reign

there is enough in these living lips (remains) to tell one the tale of their vanished glory

**Education in Bengal under Ghiyas-ud-Din I and, —II.** Ghiyās-ud-Din I of Bengāl, whose rule in that province lasted from 1212 A. C. to 1227 A. C., stands in the front rank among the eminent educationists of Bengāl. He had the good sense to realize that the material comforts of those given to research and scholarship would, if properly provided for, be wholly beneficial to the cause of learning. So, stipends to deserving literary plodders and pensions to the superannuated were granted by him. His memory is preserved in history chiefly by the *madrasah* which he built in his capital.<sup>11</sup> Ghiyās-ud-Din II, besides being a poet himself, was a liberal patron of letters. He also founded a college called *Darasbari*.<sup>12</sup> Referring to this particular abode of instruction, Mr. N. N. Law points out :—

“Many a *madrasah* like the present one (*Darasbari*) is fast losing all its marks by which it can be

**Darasbari and Madrasah-Tila.**

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became an important university-city. Hosts of eminent scholars not only resorted to his capital but were also turned out by the many *madrasahs* which he founded in the various parts of his kingdom. (Vide Brigg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. IV, pp. 196, 197, 213, 234 and 210).

11. *History of Bengal*, by Stewart, pp. 56 and 57.

12. See *Archæological Survey of India*, Vol. XV, p. 76, and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 108.

identified as such. The *madrasah*, for instance, which was built by the Musalmāns at Asthipurā (place of bones) where, it is said, the bodies of all the slain in the eighteen days' battle between the Kauravās and the Pāndavās were collected and burnt, has already disappeared, leaving but a mound which can be recognized as the remnant of a college only by its name of *Madrasah-Tila*."<sup>13</sup>

**Interest taken by  
Raja Kanis in  
Islamic education.** The interest taken in Muslim education by Rājā Kānis, who ruled in Bengāl from 1385 A. C. to 1392 A. C., is by no means negligible, though his motives were not quite genuine. We can readily understand the view presented by Mr. Stewart when he suggests that the Rājā had ulterior political aims in doing so. But as in this survey we are not concerned with what might or might not have been in his mind, it only behoves us to give an ungrudging tribute to what he did in this cause.<sup>14</sup>

**Progress of  
education in  
Bengal under the  
Hussaini Dynasty.** Hussain Shāh and Nusrat Shāh, the most remarkable kings of the Hussaini Dynasty of Bengāl, were exponents alike of Hindu

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 108 and 109.

14. *History of Bengal*, by Stewart, p. 94.



and Muslim literature. They founded schools and colleges in their kingdom and created vast endowments for their maintenance. From the ruins of the *madrasahs* it appears that they were built of marble and granite, different in character from those of their class seen in other parts of Gaur (Lakhnauti) but elegant in shape and considerable in size.<sup>15</sup>

Here I may appropriately trace the growth of Bengali literature under the encouragement of Muslim Kings and Chiefs of Bengal. The fact that the provincial vernacular (Bengali) owes its elevation to a literary status a great deal to the Musalmāns may appear an anomaly to a Bengali patriot; it is, nevertheless, an historical truth, and, as such, it cannot be called in question. It seems that the interest of the Muslims in this language was evoked partly by a sense of curiosity and partly by their love for Sanskrit with which it is closely connected. It was the celebrated epics of *Rāmāyana* and *Mahābhārata* that first caught the eyes of the Sultāns of Bengal. The first Bengali translation of the *Mahābhārata* was made under the orders of Sultān Nasir Shah (1282-1325). This Sultān was a fervent lover of Bengali literature. It was he to

Muslim Kings'  
Contribution to  
Bengali Literature.

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15. *Ibid.*, p.113; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 109 and 110



whom the famous poet Vidyāpati dedicated one of his songs. Sultān Ghiyās-ud-Din II had also much to do with the development of Bengali, the language of his domicile. It was probably at his initiative that a vernacular rendering of the *Rāmāyana* was made by Kirtivāsa; for Vidyāpati makes a reverential remark about him in his work. One of the most brilliant features of the Hussaini Rule of Bengāl is the rapid growth of native literature under its *ægis*. The contributions of the Hussaini Kings of Bengāl were not restricted to the promotion of Islamic learning alone; they also took Bengali literature under their fostering care. According to Mr. Dinesh Chandra Sen, Sultān Hussain Shāh had engaged one Malādhār Bāsu to turn the *Bhagvata Purāna* into the provincial vernacular. Parāgal Khān, his general, and Chhuti Khān, his son, have left their names in Bengali literature by translating a part of the epic of *Mahābhārata* into that vernacular. It is also recorded in various works that the former used to invite his courtiers to his palace in order to hear the recitation of the *Mahābhārata*, rendered into Bengali by Kavindra Parmeshwara up to the *Sri Parva* at that time. After his demise, the task of translation was continued by a poet, named Sri Karna Handi, under the direction of his son, Chhuti Khān,

and the *Asvāmeda Parva* was also done. Sultān Nusrat Shāh Hussaini, the second great King of that house, was responsible for another Bengali version of the *Mahā-bhārata*.<sup>16</sup>

The influence of the Musalmāns on the development of Indian vernaculars is not confined to Bengāl only. In almost every province of modern India the entire language of administration, of navigation, of technique in many an industry and craft, is of Muslim creation and bears the stamp of Muslim rule. It is both rich and sufficient ; but to its misfortune, it has been allowed to decay and die in disuse with a pitiable reaction on the ability of our youth to grasp, through the medium of a foreign language, the intricacies of modern science.<sup>17</sup>

In Gujarat during  
the days of its  
independence.

In the spring-time of its independence Gujarāt too might have justly prided itself on its wealth, strength and civilization.

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16. *History of Bengal*, by Stewart pp. 111, 113 and 408 ; *History of Bengali Literature*, by D. C. Sen, pp. 10—14, 140 and 220 ; and *Law's Promotion of Learning in India*, pp. 107 ff.

17. This is by no means to suggest that I would banish English. Persian was in those days what English is to-day—a language of world fraternity—, which I am not at all prepared to denounce or disparage. But as a humble educationist, I cannot help suggesting that at least the first steps in the education of a child can be more effectively taken through the child's own language.

Sultān Ahmad Shāh (1411—1441 A. C.) built the city of Ahmadābād and adorned it with magnificent *maktabs* and *madrasahs*, the remains of which will linger long to testify to the refined taste of their founder. His successors : Muhammad Shāh, Māhmud Big-hārha, Muzaffar Shāh, II and Muzaffar Shāh, III, were all rulers of remarkable literary taste and studious turn of mind. Their names are associated with deeds which cannot be easily tarnished. They spent some of their time in the company of *gens de lettres* and took care to supply their material needs.<sup>18</sup>

The kingdom of Kashmir kept, throughout its existence as a Muslim province, its intellectual standard fairly high. Its rulers were reputed for their love of learning and their interest in the extension of education in their kingdom. Themselves scholars of no mean standard, they spared no pains to spread knowledge among their subjects. The names of Sultān Sikandar Shāh, Zain-ul-'Abidin and Hussain Shāh stand out pre-eminent in this respect. Under their edifying influence, a fairly wide and varied literature was produced. The

**Contributions of  
Sikandar Shah,  
Zain-ul-'Abidin  
and Hussain Shah  
to the cause of  
education in  
Kashmir.**

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18. Brigg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Perishta*, Vol. IV, p. 97 ; and Erskine's *History of India*, Vol. I, p. 21.

last-named king has to his credit the establishment of many a *madrasah* in his kingdom.<sup>19</sup>

While the North loomed large in the mental horizon of the Muslim World, the South might justly be proud of possessing a superior standard of civilization. Almost all the Bahmanid Kings were generous patrons of letters. Some of them, such as Sultān Firoz Shāh, were poets and scholars; others patronized learning and literature unstintedly and opened schools and colleges in their dominions, making ample arrangements for the free education of the poor.<sup>20</sup>

The rulers of Ahmadnagar, Bijāpur and Golconda too have left their impress on the history of their times. They encouraged those in quest of knowledge and set up schools and orphanages in their capital cities. Bijāpur became a famous seat of learning under its kings, Yusaf 'Adil Shāh and Ibrāhīm 'Adil Shāh II, who belonged to the 'Adil Shāhīa Dynasty of that kingdom.<sup>21</sup> While the

19. Bugg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferīstha*, Vol. IV, pp. 469 and 470.

20. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 292, 328, 347, 349, 350, 365, 366, 369, 370, 378, 388, 398, 402 and 477; and *Making of India*, by A. Yusuf Ali, p. 86.

21. For the literary as well as educational achievements of the 'Adil Shāhīa Dynasty of Bijāpur, vide *Wāqiyāt-i-Mumli kat-i-Bijāpur*, by Bashīr-ud-Dīn Ahmad, vol. ii, pp. 274 ff.

former king invited artists and scholars from Persia, Rūm and Turkey to shed a literary lustre on his reign, the latter was himself an eminent author, to whom we owe the *Nauras* or 'nine savours'. It was under his patronage that Muhammad Qāsim, famous in history as Ferishta, flourished and wrote that valuable history of India which is the main source of our information. Golconda had its own royal *Mæcenas*: Quli Qutb Shāh and his successor Abdullāh Qutb Shāh, both of whom were poets of great distinction. Ibn Nishāti, who flourished under the fostering care of the former, wrote two important works: *Tuti Nāmah* and *Phulban*, both of which are still considered as models in the Deccanese dialect. In their benevolent solicitude for the welfare of the poor and orphans, the rulers of the three kingdoms under review established many *maktabs* and *madrasahs*, where the children of the poor and orphans received gratuitous education. Such institutions were commonly extant in Kulbarga, Bidār, Ellichpur, Daulatābād, Debal and many other places in the Deccan.<sup>22</sup>

In passing, a remark must also be made about the Imperial Library of Bijāpur, a modicum of which still exists in the Asāri Mahal.

Imperial  
Library of  
Bijapur.

22. Brigg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. III, pp. 8, 30, 31, 72, 80, 100, 206, 207, 452 and 483; and Keay's *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 119.



So says the historian of Bijāpur's Architecture about the treasures of learning accumulated there :—

“ Some of its books are curious and interesting to anyone acquainted with Arabic and Persian literature. All the valuable manuscripts were, it is said, taken away by Aurangzib in cart-loads, and what remain are literally only a remnant, but a precious one to the persons in charge of the building who show them with a mournful pride and regret.” <sup>23</sup>

/ The Kingdom of Khāndesh was not without its intellectual luminaries. **Educationists of Khandesh.** It had its own educationists, among whom the most notable was Muhammad Nasir Khān, under whom education received a new lease of life. Shaikh Zain-ud-Din and his preceptor, Burhān-ud-Din, who was at one time the Principal of a *madrasah* at Daulat-ābād, were originally from Khāndesh. <sup>24</sup>

Sultān Jalāl-ud-Din, one of the best and most powerful rulers of **State of Education in Hinawr.** Hinawr <sup>25</sup> (Hanaur), was also

23. *Architecture at Bijapur*, by Fergusson, p. 75.

24. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 98 and 99 ; and Briggs's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Feritsha*, Vol. IV, p. 286.

25. An important town, situated in the southernmost part of the Indian peninsula, Hinawr was the capital of Sultān Jalāl-ud-Din Ahsān Shāh, the founder of the independent Kingdom of Madura, which, under the Muslim occupation, comprised the entire area between the Malābār



interested in the advancement of education in his kingdom. Ibn Batūtah, the famous Moorish traveller who visited his kingdom during his reign, came across as many as twenty-three schools for boys and thirteen for girls in his capital. The traveller formed a very good opinion about the people of that place and spoke highly of their superior standard of civilization.<sup>26</sup>

and the Coromandel coasts and from Cape Comorin up to Gulbarga. The few fragments of fact, which recent researches have rescued from the past, have enabled scholars to construct only a framework of the history of this kingdom, but nothing social or cultural that may be fitted into this framework. The little information that we have about it, is from the *Travels of Ibn Batūtah*. (*Vide* J. A. S. B. Vol. XXX, 1934, No. 3, pp. 63 ff.)

26. Gibb's *Translation of Ibn Batūtah's Travels*, pp. 230 and 231.

CHAPTER V  
PROGRESS OF EDUCATION  
DURING THE MUGHAL  
PERIOD—I

“ He who favours learning and the learned honours  
me.”<sup>1</sup>

—*Muhammad.*

The advent of the Great Mughals in India  
**Introductory.** unfolds a new chapter in the  
history of Muslim education.  
Never, in fact, in the whole history of the  
Muslim Rule in India did the subject of edu-  
cation receive such a regular encouragement  
from the reigning sovereigns of Delhi as under  
the Royal House of Taimur, whose every  
member was its die-hard exponent. The  
Mughal Court was, during the days of its  
ascendancy, the cradle of the sage and the  
scholar. It was renowned all over the eastern  
hemisphere for its liberality; it received  
under its benevolent care, all those who  
came there from distant lands in search of  
patronage.

**Babar's Literary  
attainments.** Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Bābar, the  
illustrious founder of the  
Mughal Empire, was a great

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<sup>1</sup>. See *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, pp. 360 and 361.

literary genius. As a scholar, he was second to none in his line. His *Memoirs* are an index to his intellectual achievements and a monument to his memory. He is rightly regarded as the 'prince of autobiographers'. He is stated to have invented a new type of handwriting, called *Bābari* after his own name. As a poet, he was equally unrivalled among the crowned heads of his house. Some of his poetical compositions are indeed captivating. His society included men who will live long in literature: Ghiyās-ud-Din Muhammad Khudāmir, a Persian historian and author of many works; and Maulānā Shahāb-ud-Din, an enigmatist, poet and punster rolled into one, being the most friendly to fame.<sup>2</sup>

Bābar did not stop short at the mere encouragement of literary men. At his instance, the Shuhrat-i-'Am (Public Works Department) was entrusted, in addition to other duties, with 'the Publication of a Gazette

He makes the diffusion of education a duty of the state.

2. For a detailed account of Bābar's literary accomplishments, see *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. IV, pp. 141, 143 and 219; *Memoirs of Bābar*, by Erskine, pp. 50, 51, 291, 431 and 432; Brigg's *Translation of Tārikh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. II, pp. 61 and 65; *Mediæval India*, by Stanley Lane-Poole, pp. 193 and 194; Lane-Poole's *Babar*, pp. 22 and 30; *History of India*, by M. Elphinstone, pp. 428 and 429; Ranking's *Translation of Muntakhib-ut-Twārikh*, vol. I. p. 419; *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 121 ff.; and my *Mughal Empire*, Ch. II.

and the building of schools and colleges'.<sup>3</sup> The fact that the establishment of educational institutions constituted an important item of Bābar's administrative programme, speaks much for his interest in the extension of education in his Indian Empire.

**Humayun's love of books and literary tastes.** Bābar was succeeded by his son, Nasir-ud-Din Muhammad Humāyun, who was a great bibliophile and a studious scholar. He had collected a vast number of books in the Imperial Library. In fact, so intense was his love for the best books of the day that even in his military undertakings he used to take with him a select library for his own use. Count Noer informs us that on the eve of his flight from India he took with him his favourite books along with his faithful librarian, called Lāla Beg, otherwise known as Bāz Bahādur. Under his orders the pleasure-house of Sher Shāh, called Sher Mandal, was turned into a library during his second reign.<sup>4</sup>

**His literary associates.** In revising the social organization of his empire, Humāyun assigned a place to the scholar next but

3. *Vide my Mughal Empire*, Ch. 11; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 126-27.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 128 ff.

one to the Emperor in dignity. Among those, who prospered at his Court and associated with him, were Khudāmir, Jauhar, Abdul Latif and Shaikh Hussain. The one last named was a professor of a *madrasah* founded by the Emperor at Delhi. As Humāyun was very fond of astronomy and geography, these branches of science made considerable progress during his reign. He is said to have indited some dissertations on the nature of the elements and ordered the construction of celestial and terrestrial globes for his own use immediately after his accession to the throne. And Ferishta tells us that he fitted up seven halls for the reception of his officers and dedicated them to seven planets. One of them was reserved for the reception of the learned.<sup>5</sup>

**Educational progress under Sher Shah and his successors.** Sher Shāh, the founder of the Sūr Dynasty, who deposed Humāyun and ruled for four years, did much for the promotion of education in his dominions notwithstanding the short duration of his reign. He had received his education at Jaunpur, the radiant

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5. *History of India as told by his own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. v. pp. 119 ff ; *Brigg's Translation of Ferishta*, Vol. ii, pp. 70, 71, 178-180 ; *Ranking's Translation of Mantakhīb at Twārikh*, Vol. i, p. 602 ; *Akbarnāmāh*, Trans., Blochmann, Vol. i, p. 287 ; *Ain-i-Akbari*, Trans., Blochmann, Vol. i. p. 538 ; and my *Mughal Empire*, Ch. III.



centre of Islamic culture and erudition in India at that time. No wonder, he became in due course, a cultured king and a serious scholar. Of the educational institutions that he opened, the one at Narnaul (in the Patyāla District), called the Sher Shāhi Madrasah, was the most gigantic. It was founded in 1520 A. C., *i.e.*, before he became king.<sup>6</sup> His immediate successor, Jalāl Khān, whose royal title was Islām Shāh (also Salim Shāh), followed in the footsteps of his father, at least in his educational outlook. His attachment to literature, like that of his predecessor, was very strong, and his respect for the learned profound. Two eminent scholars, *viz.* Shaikh Abdullāh Sultānpuri Makhdum-ul-Mulk and Shaikh Abdul Hassan Kamboo, were his constant companions.<sup>7</sup>

Akbar's reign, characterized as it was by  
Litterateurs of  
Akbar's reign. ubiquitous peace and prosperity, afforded ample opportunities for literary activities in India. His

6. See *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. iv, pp. 311, 413 and 538; Ranking's, *Translation of Muntakhib-ut-Twārikh*, Vol i, pp. 466; Brigg's *Translation of Tārikh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. ii, p. 100; *History of Bengal*, by Stewart, pp. 127 and 128; and *Promotion of Learning in India* by N. N. Law, pp. 136 ff.

7. Ranking's *Translation of Muntakhib-ut-Twārikh*, Vol. i, pp. 507 and 508; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 138.

Court was crowded with men who have found an abiding place in the hearts of historians. 'Allāma Abul Fazal and his brother, Abul Faiz, popularly called Faizi, are too well known to need description. Abdul Qādir Bada'oni, Khan-i-Khānān Abdur Rahim and so many others, whose names cannot be mentioned here for want of space, lived under the patronage of the Imperial Court, which raised them above wants, even to affluence. Vast impetus was also given to original research and scholarship, and authorship was rewarded with munificent allowances. As a result, we have those masterpieces of literature which, like the *Ain-i-Akbari*, are monuments of well-digested erudition.<sup>8</sup>

We learn that Agra, in the reign of Akbar, was a famous seat of learning and a celebrated centre of education. It had several schools and colleges, where students flocked from far and wide for listening to the lectures of renowned specialists, and where distinguished scholars of Shirāz were appointed as professors.

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8. For the above information, see my *Mughal Empire*, Chapter IX. Also see Blochmann's *Ain-i-Akbari*, pp. 96 ff. ; Gladwin's *Ain-i-Akbari*, pp. 85 ff. ; *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. iv pp. 218 ff., Vol. v. pp. 478 ff. ; Lowe's *Translation of Muntakhib-ut-Twārikh*, Vol. ii, pp. 207, 216 ; and Brigg's *Translation of Tārikh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. ii, p. 280

Sil Chand says that a big *madrasah* existed there even upto his own time, and we learn from another source that Akbar himself once employed a famous philosopher of Shirāz as a professor in that institution.<sup>9</sup>

Lāhore too was, at this time, an eminent abode of literary geniuses. It was here that celebrated *Tārīkh-i-Alfi* was written and the *Mahābhāratha* and the *Rājtarangni* were translated into Persian. Again it was here that the Emperor commenced his religious and metaphysical discussions with the learned men of this place. The famous historian, Nizām-ud-Din Ahmad, author of the *Tabqāt-i-Akbārī*, and Rāja Todar Mall, the Revenue Minister, also passed their time and breathed their last at Lahore.<sup>10</sup>

The newly-founded city of Fathpur Sikri (city of victory) was also studied with several schools and seminaries. The well-known Ibādat Khānā (literally a House of Worship, but in fact a Debating Hall), founded in 1578 A. C. in the new city, played a premier part in influencing the life and thought of the people. It was the meeting-place of the intellectuals of various nationalities and the centre of a set of

Lahore as a centre  
of literary  
activities.

Fathpur Sikri and  
the Ibādat Khānā.

<sup>9</sup>9. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 163.

<sup>10</sup>10. *Ibid.*, p. 150, l. n. 5.

brilliant scholars of the reign. In it the representatives of different schools of thought used to discuss minute points of their religions. Its importance lay in the fact that it was used as a place, a pulpit and a platform, from which unity was preached and propagated. The much-mooted Din-i-Ilāhi (Divine Faith), the real aim of which was not religious but national unity, was promulgated there.<sup>11</sup>

Profound as was Akbar's love of learning and respect for the learned, no less was his fondness for fostering literature which feeds on knowledge and feeds knowledge again and becomes a valuable asset to education in general. Under his patronage, a goodly number of books on history, philosophy, religion and other sciences were written, compiled and translated, and the result was a literature of a very high order. The Book of Akbar called *Akbar Nāmah* and the *Ain-i-Akbari* (Regulations of Akbar), written by 'Allāma Abul Fazal, not to speak of many other important works from his prolific pen; the *Tārikh-i-Alfi*, compiled by a company of capable scholars; the *Muntakhib-ut-Twārikh* or the *Tārikh-i-Badāoni*, secretly written by Abdul Qādir Badāoni;

Original works,  
translations and  
compilations.

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11. *Ibid.*, pp. 162-63; Elliot and Dowson's *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. v, pp. 390-91; and Keay's *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 122.

the *Tabqāt-i-Akbari* by Nizam-ud-Din Ahmad, and the *Munshiāt* of Abul Fateh, are some of the most marvellous masterpieces of Persian literature produced in Muslim India during the reign of Akbar the Great. Likewise, under his encouragement, several copious works were translated into Persian from other languages. Khān-i-Khānān Abdur Rahim put into Persian the *Wāqiyāt-i-Bābari* (Memoirs of Bābar) from the the original Turkish, and presented it to the Emperor, who was not slow in rewarding his labours. The *Jāmi-i-Rashidi* was translated from Arabic into Persian by Abdul Qādir Bādāoni and the *Mu'ajam-ul-Buldān*—a geographical work of rare charm—, by Mullah Ahmad T'hat hāh, Qāsim Beg, Shaikh Munawwar, Abdul Qādir and many other scholars. The *Bādshāh-Nāmāh* (Book of Kings) was also put into Persian prose and the *Hayāt-ul-Haiwān* was also translated into Persian. In order to promote free exchange of social as well as spiritual thoughts between the Hindus and the Musalmāns, a large number of Sanskrit and Hindi books were translated into Persian under the imperial patronage. The *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhāratha*, the *Atharva Veda* and the *Bhagvata Gita*, and the *Sangāsan Bittisi*, the *Rājtarangni* and many other books were put into Persian and given new names. The translation of many



of the above-mentioned books being complete, they were embellished with charming illustrations and beautiful bindings.<sup>12</sup>

At the instance of the Emperor, the Imperial Library was enriched with innumerable additions.

Important works, written by ancient authors of repute, in prose or verse, and dealing with history philosophy, science and religion, were collected and placed in the Imperial Library. In order to facilitate reference, books in Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit and Hindi were separately classed under sciences and histories. The Librarian was Faizi, the fittest man for the job. Faizi, it may be pointed out here, was the Persian Poet-laureate of his time and an intellectual giant, whose inquiries into Hindu arts and sciences form a most conspicuous part of the literature of that 'Augustan Age.'<sup>13</sup>

Such educational richness as has been surveyed, furnishes a direct clue to the existence of a sound system of education, which may profitably be described here at some length. To begin

Propagation  
of education.

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12. *My Mughal Empire*, Chapter IX; *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp 147, ff.; and *Darbār-i-Akhari* by M. Muhammad Hussain Azād, pp 115 ff.

13. Gladwin's trans. of *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. ii, pp. 85-86. Mullah Pir Muhammad was also at one time the superintendent of the Imperial Library. (*Vide* Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 151, f. n. 2; and *Darbār-i-Akbari*, by M. Muhammad Hussain Azād, p. 114).

with, Akbar had early realised the importance of education for the making and development of a nation. Accordingly, under his instructions, numerous *maktabs* and *madrasahs*, for both resident and day-scholars, were founded and richly endowed. The most admirable and noteworthy of them all was the one built by him in the city of Fathpur Sikri, 'the like of which', says the author of the '*Ain* 'few travellers can name'. Education was encouraged in every possible way. Stipends and scholarships were granted to the deserving *alumni* and arrangements were also made for the free education of the poor. At this time Kāja Todar Mall made Persian education compulsory for his co-religionists, presumably for its pecuniary advantages. As a result, Hindus began to study Persian with the same zeal as the Indians now study English, and, in due course, became quite efficient to compete with the Musalmāns in every sphere of Mughal administration.<sup>14</sup>

Reforms in  
education. Akbar was not satisfied with the mere multiplication of *maktabs* and *madrasahs* in his far-flung empire, much less with the quality of education that was then imparted. With a view to

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14. Gladwin's trans of *Ain-i-Akbari*, p. 146; Jarret's—, p. 180; Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, pp. 160—162; and Keay's *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 122.

improve the existing system of education and to give it a national bias, he introduced the following reforms :

In the first instance, the *modus operandi* of imparting education was improved in such a way that it took relatively very little time to possess sufficiently decent education. According to the new method of teaching, a boy had to pass through three distinct stages before he became able to read and write without difficulty : First of all he was taught the Persian alphabet with correct pronunciation and signs of accents. After mastering the alphabet, 'which did not take more than two days', he was taught the combination of two letters, which hardly took him a week to master. Finally, he was asked to read short lines of prose or poetry containing the praise of God or some moral lesson in which those combinations most frequently occurred. This was all the teacher was expected to do for him. Thereafter he must work hard, use his own intellect and read his book independently, with occasional help from his teacher. In order to keep him in touch with his lessons, the teacher used to give him four exercises daily as follows : (1) alphabet, (2) combinations, (3) a new hemistich or distich, and (4) the repetition of what he had read before. The new method of imparting

**Method of teaching.**

instruction proved so successful that what usually took a student years to learn was now learnt in only a few months. The results of this method were so beneficial that 'Allāma Abul Fazal prided himself on the fact that all civilized nations had schools for the education of youths ; but Hindustān was particularly famous for its seminaries. It must, however, be pointed out at this place that the 'Allāma was responsible for many of the reforms in the system of education and for this we must pay him an ungrudging tribute.<sup>15</sup>

Secondly, the curriculum was so modified  
 Curriculum. as to enable the students to  
 acquire education according  
 to their particular aims and ambitions. Nothing was forcibly thrust upon them ; but it was laid down that 'none should be allowed to neglect those things which the present time requires'—an injunction which 'may be taken as a suggestion that the practical side of education should not be neglected.' The various arts and sciences were taught in the following order :—ethics, arithmetic, accounts, agriculture, geometry, longimetry, astronomy, geomancy, economics, the art of administration,

15. Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 161 ; Blochmann's trans. of *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. ii, pp. 278-79, Gladwin's trans. of —, pp. 192-93 ; *Tārīkh-i-Hindustān*, by M. Zaka-ullāh, Vol. v, p. 717 and Keay's *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 124

physics, logic, natural philosophy, abstract mathematics, divinity and history.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, the ideals and objectives of education were changed from being strictly religious into purely political. With one who was the apostle of Indian unity and the governing passion of whose life was the creation of a nation in India, the aim of education could be nothing less than the unification of India—unification in every sense: political, religious, social and cultural. With his characteristic broad-mindedness and national outlook, Akbar sought to have education imparted to all classes of his subjects, irrespective of their race or religion, caste or creed. Hindus were educated in the same schools and on the same level as Muslims, and in their own culture. This nationalization of education was fraught with far-reaching consequences. It led to mutual love and respect and created a nation where formerly there was none.<sup>17</sup>

Thus it is evident that education in Muslim India was at its most complete development in the reign of

16. Blochman's trans. of *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. ii, pp. 278-79; Gladwin's—, pp. 192-93 and *Ancient Indian Education*, by Keay, pp. 124 and 125.

17. Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, pp. 160, 161 and 162.



Akbar the Great. "Mussalman education (that is education not specifically for Mussalmans, but education for a mixed population under Muslim Rule) was", says Dr. James H. Cousins, and with good grounds, "at its most inclusive stage in the reign of Emperor Akbar, and therefore at that stage it presents to us the largest selection of educational ideas to estimate our thought in the educational reconstruction of to-day."<sup>18</sup>

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18. Dr. J. H. Cousin's article on '*Education in Muslim India*', in the *Eastern Times*, dated 7th June, 1935. Ain 25 of the *Ain-i-Akbari* is devoted to the subject of education. It may be reproduced here inasmuch as it brings out Akbar's interest in, and care for, education :—

"In every country, especially in Hindustan, boys are kept for years at school, where they learn the consonents and vowels. A great portion of the life of the students is wasted by making them read many books. His Majesty orders that every schoolboy should first learn to write the letters of the alphabet, and also learn to trace their several forms. He ought to learn the shape and name of each letter, which may be done in two days, when the boy should proceed to write the joined letters. They may be practised for a week, after which the boy should learn some prose and poetry by heart, and then commit to memory some verses to the praise of God, or moral sentences, each written separately. Care is to be taken that he learns to understand everything himself, but the teacher may assist him a little. He then ought for some time to be daily practised in writing a hemistich or a verse, and will soon acquire a current hand. The teacher ought specially to look after five things, knowledge of the letters ; meanings of words, the hemistich ; the verse ; the former lesson. If this method of teaching be adopted a boy will learn in a month, or even in a day, what it took others years to understand, so much so that people will get quite astonished. Every boy ought to read books on morals, arithmetic, the notation peculiar to arithitetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy,

physiognomy, household matters, the rules of government, medicine, logic the *tabi'i*, *riyāzi* and *ilāhi* sciences and history; all of which may be gradually acquired. In studying Sanskrit, students ought to learn the Bayakaran, Niyai, Bedanta, and Patanjali. No one should be allowed to neglect those things which the present time requires. These regulations shed a new light on schools, and cast a bright lustre over *madrasahs*". ('The *tabi'i*, *riyāzi*, and *ilāhi* sciences are the names of the threefold divisions of sciences. *Ilāhi*, or divine sciences, comprise everything connected with theology, and the means of acquiring a knowledge of God. *Riyāzi* sciences treat of quantity, and comprise mathematics, astronomy, music, and mechanics. *Tabi'i* sciences comprehend physical sciences').

## CHAPTER VI PROGRESS OF EDUCATION DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD—II

"The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood  
of the martyr." 1

— Muhammad.

Jahāngir was a scholar as well as a poet. He wrote his autobiography, which is the main source of our information about his reign. He was an unfailing friend of the learned. Among the many court-scholars whom he patronized, the *Tuzk-i-Jahāngiri* (Memoirs of Jahangir) and the *Iqbāl-nāmāh* (another account of Jahangir's reign) have mentioned the following: Ni'mat-ullah, the historiographer of Jahāngir who crystallized into a book the material accumulated by Haibat Khān of Samna about the history of the Afghāns; Mirza Ghiyās Beg, the best arithmetician, who also stood splendid and unsurpassed in the elegance of composition; Abdul Haq Dehlawi, one of the most erudite men of the day, who wrote an account of the lives of the Shaikhs of Hindustān and presented it to His Majesty; and Naqib Khān, the most honoured historian of the Court. Among the poets, the most

Jahangir's literary  
associates.

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1. See *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, p. 360.

favourite to the Muse were Baba Talib Isfahāni, Fasuni Kāshi, Malik-ush-Shu'ara Talib-i-Amli, Mir Kāsim Kāshi, Mullah Haider Khasali, Mullah Hayāti Gilāni, Mullah Muhammad Shafi Mazandrāni, Mullah Naziri Nishāpuri, Sa'ada-i-Gilāni and Shaida.<sup>2</sup>

So much was Jahāngir interested in promoting the cause of education that soon after his accession to the throne he repaired and reconstructed even those moribund *maktabs and madrasahs*, which had been for three decades the dwelling-places of birds and beasts,' and populated them with professors and students.<sup>3</sup> Under his instructions, the Imperial Library was augmented with numerous valuable additions and was entrusted to the care of Maktub Khān, who proved himself an expert librarian. Not only this—henceforth the property of the heirless deceased was appropriated by the Government and part of it was spent to defray the expenses of State schools.<sup>4</sup>

Jahāngir was passionately fond of good books, so much so that on his visit to Gujarāt he took with

His interest in the spread of education.

His love for good books.

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2. *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. vi, pp. 315 and 360; and *History of India*, by M. Elphinstone, p. 548.

3. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 175

4. *Muntakhib-ul-Lubbāb*, by Khāfi Khān, p. 249.

him a library for his own use. From this library he gave to the Shaikhs of that province in token of his appreciation of their scholarship, such books as the *Rauzat-ul-Āhbāb*, the *Tafsir-i-Hussaini* and the *Tafsir-i-Kashshaf*. On the back of these books, he wrote in his own handwriting, the date of his arrival in Gujarat and the day of presentation of those books.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Martin supplies us with the following details with regard to his love of books and the prices of Persian manuscripts in his times :—

“Collectors (of books) complain of the  
 Extremely high prices of Persian manuscripts in his times. exorbitant prices they were called upon to pay for Persian manuscripts, and yet the highest prices now paid are small in comparison with the sums they cost their former owners. The manuscript for which Jahangir paid 3,000 gold rupees—a sum equivalent to £10,000—would not fetch £ 2,000 at a sale in Paris to-day. From notes and calculations I have made, miniatures by Bihzad (the famous Persian painter) were worth hundreds of pounds each, and certain of his manuscripts were then worth ten times more than now. Some decades ago, when bibliophiles still existed in the East, far higher prices were

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<sup>5</sup> *Tusk-i-Jahāngiri*, translated by Rogers and Beve-  
 ridge. pp. 439 and 440.



paid there than in London or Paris to-day. Through the following centuries, the same love for old books prevailed, and ridiculous prices were paid for them, as high in proportion as Americans now pay for Rembrandts and Van Dycks. The Mongols, the Timurides, the Mughals, Emperors and Amirs, all, paid prices which we hardly understand, and it was not unusual for a celebrated manuscript of the Qur'ān to realize a sum that would be equivalent to about a million francs in modern currency."<sup>6</sup>

The extremely high prices paid for valuable manuscripts undoubtedly point to the absence of the printing press, but they also show that learning was loved and pursued for personal improvement. Since books commanded high prices—and they commanded high prices because there was a great demand for them on the part of the bibliophiles,—their authors must have profited much from them. Such high prices, moreover, must have stimulated authorship which is proved by the great mass of literature that has come down to us.

Shāh Jahān, on the heels of Jahāngir, rose to be the most beneficent member of his most beneficent house. Himself a cultured

**Scholars of Shah Jahan's Court and his son's literary work.**

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6. *Miniature Painting and Painters of Persia, India and Turkey*, Vol. i, p. 58.

king and a refined scholar, he always appreciated and rewarded literary worth from whatever sources it was evinced. Amin Qazwini and Abdul Hakim Siālkoti were among the most shining stars of his court.<sup>7</sup> His eldest son, Dārā Shikoh, was 'a voluminous writer'. To his prolific pen we must credit the *Hasnat-ul-'Arifin*, the *Majma-ul-Bahārin*, the *Nādir-ul-Nakut*, the *Risālā-i-Haqnuma*, the *Safinat-ul-Auliya* and the *Sakinat-ul-Auliya*. The Prince was profoundly interested in Hindu learning. Under his patronage, the *Vedās* and other Sanskrit books were translated into Persian.<sup>8</sup>

Such a scholarly sovereign as Shāh Jahān who was deeply interested in the moral as well as material welfare of his subjects, cannot be said to have neglected their education. The following picture of the state of education during his reign as painted by Bernier is a travesty of facts :—

7. *Vide Anecdotes of Aurangzib and Historical Essays*, by Sir J. N. Sarkar, p. 174; *Bādshāhnāmih* by Abdul Hamid Lāhori. Vol. i, pp. 106, 318, 364, and Vol. ii, pp. 127, 138, 184, and 309; and *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. vii, p. 1.

8. *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. viii, pp. 159, 179; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law. pp. 184, 185 and 186.

“A gross and profound ignorance reigns in those states. For how is it possible that there should be academies and colleges well founded? Where are those founders to be met with? And if there were any, where were the scholars to be had? Where are those that have means to maintain their children in colleges? And if there were, who would appear to be so rich? And if they would, where are those benefices, preferments and dignities that require knowledge and abilities, and that may animate youngmen to study?”<sup>9</sup>

No critical reading of the above passage is necessary. A cursory glance through it is enough to reveal to the reader the fallacy of Bernier's arguments. In the first place, I cannot imagine that the reign of such an enlightened and amiable sovereign as Shāh Jahān should have lacked schools and colleges. Secondly, when one has once gleaned through the record of educational achievements succinctly surveyed in this book, one is apt to be at a loss to account for such a gloomy picture, particularly in view of the fact that the immediate predecessors of Shāh Jahān were founders of innumerable schools and

**Fallacy of Bernier's arguments and falsity of his account.**

9. *Bernier's Travels*, translated by Ouldinburgh, p. 210

seminaries, mosques and libraries. Thirdly, I must remind the reader that Bernier, who is wholly responsible for the above account, 'lived in India more like a student than a traveller.' During his stay at the Mughal Court he was ceaselessly occupied in the study of Persian and the translation of European books. He was constantly engaged in discoursing with the Pandits on Hindu lore, religion, institutions, customs and traditions. In consequence, therefore, he could not devote sufficient time to inquire into the true state of education. Lastly, 'as a good Catholic he might have carried a prejudice against Islam' and so drawn a melancholy picture.

That Shāh Jahān was not a reactionary is proved by the fact that he 'did nothing to undo the educational work of his father and grandfather.' Mr. N. N. Law asserts that all the educational institutions, with their rich endowments made by the previous Emperors, nobles and private gentlemen, continued in unabated prosperity in his time'.<sup>10</sup> Apart from what has been said, there is ample evidence to show that His Majesty himself made enduring contributions which added enormously to the momentum of the whole movement.

Shah Jahan's  
contributions to  
the cause of  
education.

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10. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p 181

*Dar-ul-Baqā* (or the Abode of Eternity) had once been a magnificent *madrasah*, but lay in ruins in his reign. He had it reconstructed and appointed Maulāna Sadr-ud-Din Khān Bahādur, the Chief Justice of Delhi, as its director and employed efficient professors to teach its students.<sup>11</sup> In the year 1658 A. C. he founded the famous Imperial College to the south of the *Jāma Masjid* in Delhi.<sup>12</sup> And, according to Mr. B. P. Saksena, he appointed the teachers of the colleges at Delhi and Agra.<sup>13</sup>

So the statements of Dr. Bernier may bear on a certain phase of Shāh Jahān's reign, but are by no means a true perspective of a prolonged period of peace and prosperity preceding the upheaval (War of Succession) that synchronized with his presence in India.

Alamgir's interest in education in the main took after his general policy, which aimed at bringing the law in line with the tenets of his religion. Well-versed in Arabic, Persian and his own mother tongue, Chughtāi Turkish, he was equally adept in several arts and sciences.

Alamgir's interest  
in education.

11. *Asār-us-Sanādīd*, by Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan, p. 69.

12. "To the north of the *Jami' Masjid* (of Delhi) was the Imperial Dispensary, and to the south was the Imperial College.....They were built with the mosque in 1660 A. H. (1630)." (*Vide Archaeology of Delhi*, by Carr Stephen, p. 255).

13. *History of Shāh Jahan of Delhi*; by B. P. Saksena.



He was thoroughly conversant with Muslim theology and the mysteries of Arabic grammar.<sup>14</sup> He enunciated his own theory of royal education which emphasised the importance of general knowledge.

Alamgir 'founded numberless schools and colleges' in his kingdom and never neglected his duty with regard to the education of his subjects in the outlying provinces that acknowledged his suzerainty. Particularly was he keen about the education of the Bohrās of Gujarāt, for whom he appointed trained teachers and arranged monthly examinations, the results of which were regularly reported to him. Likewise, Imperial *Firmāns* were issued to other provincial governors with the instructions that they should be careful about the education of their subjects. In 1678 A. C. he sanctioned an enormous sum of money for the repair and reconstruction of the old *maktabs* and *madrasahs* of Gujarāt and ordered its *Diwān* to extend necessary support to the students of these colleges. Ali Muhammad Khān has recorded in his *Mirāt-i-Ahmadi* that imperial orders were also sent to the effect that three professors more in Ahmadābād,

Foundation of  
numberless  
schools and  
colleges by him.

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14. See my *Mughal Empire*, Chapter XVI; Stanley-Lane-Poole's *Aurangzib*, p 22; and *History of Aurangzib*, by Sir J. N. Sarkar, Vol. i, pp. 4 ff.

Patan and Surat and forty-five students more in Ahmadābād be added to the existing number. The same authority is also responsible for the piece of information that 'Aurangzeb assisted students in proportion to their proficiency in their education, with daily stipends.'<sup>15</sup>

As the Emperor was exceedingly fond of theology and Islamic Law, Imperial Library. the Imperial Library was, at his instance, augmented with innumerable additions of important theological works and those on Islamic jurisprudence and other sciences. The famous *Fatāwa-i-Alamgiri*, a work of great authority on the Muslim Law and an indispensable guide for the Bar and the Bench to-day, was prepared by a number of theologians and jurists under his personal supervision and placed in the Imperial Library.<sup>16</sup>

The system of instruction followed in the Educational achievements of Alamgir's reign. schools and colleges founded by Alamgir, must have been based on his own theory of education, which even Bernier has no hesitation to acknowledge.

15. *Vide Fall of the Mughal Empire*, by Keen, p. 23; *Bernier's Travels* (Constable's Ed.). p. 292: *Mirāt-i-Ahmadi*, by Ali Mohd Khān, Vol. i, pp. 272, 309, 363, 373, 378, Vol. ii, p. 37; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 188, f. n. 3.

16. *Ma'āsiri-i-Alamgiri*, by Muhammad Sāqi, p. 530.

That it proved extremely efficacious and led to an extensive diffusion of knowledge, is borne out by the rise of a number of eminent poets and scholars in the Mughal Empire. The *Farhāt-ul-Nāzīrīn* mentions the names of forty-five distinguished poets, of whom Sarmad was indisputably the most outstanding. Of them, six had hailed from Lāhore and one, called Chandar Bhuan, was evidently a Hindu. The same source of information is further responsible for the fact that there were thirty-one *litterateurs*, some of whom, such as Dānishmand Khān, Fazal Khān, Shaikh Harwi and Itimād Khān, had also qualified themselves as shrewd administrators. Over and above, there were thirty-six more, who distinguished themselves in religious sphere. Among the rest, such renowned teachers as Abdul Aziz, Abdullāh and Abdul Karim, deserve specific mention. Finally, there were many others who achieved their laurels in literature by writing volumes on various subjects.<sup>17</sup>

Literary and  
educational  
achievements of  
the later Mughal  
Kings.

The successors of Aurangzeb—Bahadur Shāh I, Muhammad Shāh, Shāh Alam II and Bahadur Shāh II—were all noted for

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<sup>17</sup> *Aurangzeb*, by M. Elphinstone, edited by Prof. Sri Ram Sharma, pp. 251. ff. Also see my *Mughal Empire*, Chapter XVI. For Aurangzeb's theory of royal education, see ch. XI of this book.

their literary knowledge. Some of them were poets of elegant tastes; others were scholars of exquisite refinement. Though mere political nonentities, they were nevertheless, great patrons of letters and zealous promoters of education. They had all identified themselves with the cause of learning and the learned.<sup>18</sup>

Never in the whole history of India did art and literature, science and philosophy, industry and commerce flourish as a whole quite as much as during the two hundred years of the Great Mughals' rule.<sup>19</sup> Obviously, this tremendous progress is a tribute to the type of education that was then imparted by the Mughal Emperors, whose interest in this noble cause was occasioned by their own love of learning. If, therefore, education made mighty strides during the Mughal Period, it was because these Emperors were great educationists who far outshone their contemporaries in literary attainments.<sup>20</sup>

18. For a panoramic account of the literary achievements of the later Mughals, *vide Tarikh-i-Hindustan*, by M. Zakā-Ullah Sāhib, Vol. viii, pp. 504 and 505; Vols. ix and x, pp. 311, 312 and 346; *Oriental Biographical Dictionary*, Beale, *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. viii, p. 249; and *Mirāt-i-Ahmadi* by Ali Muhammad Khan, Vol. i, p. 410.

19. *The Splendour that was 'Ind*, by K. T. Shah, p. 30.

20. *Annals and Antiquities of Rājasthān*, by Lt Col James Tod, Vol. i, pp. 298-99.





# **PROGRESS OF EDUCATION—II**

## **PRIVATE PATRONAGE**



## CHAPTER VII

# PROGRESS OF EDUCATION DURING THE EARLY MUSLIM PERIOD

**"The greatest ornament of man is erudition".**  
—Ali.

**Introductory.** Hitherto I have dwelt on the promotion of learning and education by Muslim Kings alone; I shall now devote a few pages to Private Enterprise, which too was active in this direction. The cultural history of Muslim India is rich not only in records of copious contributions made by Muslim Kings to the sacred cause of education, but also in immortal achievements of other Musalmāns of means in the sphere of education. The share of these Muslims in the spread of religious as well as general education was considerable and calls for a special comment. They caught the spirit of their sovereigns and further increased the facilities for education by founding and endowing *maktabs* and *madrasahs*, mosques and monasteries, libraries and literary societies, which, in point of beauty and extent, often rivalled those founded by the Imperial Patrons. This and the three subsequent chapters deal with this

subject and the information embodied in them will, it is hoped, throw ample light on the subject to enable the reader to appreciate the importance and appraise the efficacy of their selfless endeavours in this sphere of human welfare.

To begin with, Sayyad Maula, who flourished in the reign of Sultān Ghiyās-ud-Din Balban, was such a profound and competent scholar that he numbered even the princes and peers among his pupils and disciples. He was one of the most distinguished advocates of education. An alm-house for the support of learned travellers, who frequently visited Delhi, owed its origin and existence to his indefatigable efforts and industry. He also founded a college at Dehli and staffed it with brilliant professors.<sup>1</sup>

The reign of Sultān Alā-ud-Din Khilji, noted as it was for literary activities, afforded a very favourable field to voluntary zealots in the cause of education. There were numerous nobles who came to their aid with liberal benefactions. There were, for

<sup>1</sup> *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 28 and 32; and Brigg's Translation of *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. i, p. 271.

instance, the nobles of Nauhatta, who were noted for their interest in the students who came from distant places to study in the schools and colleges at Delhi. Again, one may specifically mention the Sayyads of Gardez, who had settled in Delhi,—Sayyad Chhajju (otherwise known as Jāhji) and Sayyad Ajāli in particular—not to speak of Muin-ud-Din, Jalāl, Ali and many others of the Jajr Family, who were behind nobody in coming out with their contributions to the cause of learning and education. The Sayyads of Biānah too had much to do with the extension of education in Delhi. They were as remarkable for their love of learning and interest in education as the Sayyads of Gardez and the nobles of Nauhatta.<sup>2</sup> The cumulative effect of the efforts of all these voluntary zealots was that Delhi, which was already at the top of fame, became more famous as a centre of education, to which hundreds of foreigners flocked for the cultivation of various arts and sciences.

<p>Of the numberless philosophers and poets, Specialists in various branches of knowledge, who flourished under Private Patronage.</p>	<p>jurists and theologians, chronologists and historians, scientists and physicians, minstrels</p>
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2. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 36-37; and Brigg's Translation of *Tārīkh-i-Ferīshṭa*, Vol. i, p. 377.



and musicians, linguists and others, who prospered even without the fostering patronage of the reigning Sultān, so vital to the literary and educational advance of the people, the most renowned may be mentioned here. They were: Amir Arslān, a distinguished historian; Maulāna Alim-ud-Din, Jamāl-ud-Din Shatbi, Alā-ud-Din Maqri and Khwājāh Zikki—specialists in the Qur'ān; Maulāna Badr-ud-Din Damishqi, Maulāna Sadr-ud-Din, Jawāini Tabib and 'Alm-ud-Din—experts in the art of healing; Sayyad Mughis-ud-Din, Sayyad Muntajib-ud-Din, Sayyad Rukn-ud-Din and Sayyad Tāj-ud-Din—doctors of literature; Maulāna Imām-ud-Din Hassan, Maulāna Hamid, Maulāna Latif, Maulāna Shahāb-ud-Din Khalil and Maulāna Ziā-ud-Din Sannavi—adepts in the performance of *Tazkirs*; Kabir-ud-Din, well known for his eloquence and ability in *belles lettres* in general; and Amir Hassan, known as 'the Sa'adi of Hindustan' on account of his proficiency in poetry.<sup>3</sup> Besides the few enumerated above, there were numerous others who had distinguished themselves in other departments of knowledge. They were well-versed in Usūl-i-Din (theology), *Fiqh* (jurisprudence),

3. *Vide Tārīkh-i-Fīrozshāhi* by Zia-ud-Din Barni, pp. 341 ff.; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 37-39.

*Usul-i-Fiqah* (logic), *Nāḥwa* (grammar), *Badi-o-Bāyān* (history), and *Tafsir* (commentaries on the Muslim Scriptures).<sup>4</sup> Barni supplies us with a list of some of them, and it is reproduced here:—

Maulāna	Alā-ud-Din Kark,
„	Alā-ud-Din Lāhori,
„	Alā-ud-Din Sadr-ul-Shariah,
„	Alā-ud-Din Tājar,
„	Burhān-ud-Din Bhakri,
„	Fakhr-ud-Din Hansuli,
„	Fakhr-ud-Din Shaqāqil,
„	Hamid-ud-Din Maniāni,
„	Hamid-ud-Din Mukhlis,
„	Hasam-ud-Din Ibn Shādi
„	Hujjat Multāni Qadim,
„	Husām-ud-Din Surkh,
„	Iftikhār-ud-Din Barni,
„	Iftikhār-ud-Din Rāzi,
„	Kamāl-ud-Din Koli,
„	Karim-ud-Din Jauhari,
„	Minhāj-ud-Din Qabni,
„	Mirān Mariklah,
„	Muin-ud-Din Loni,
„	Muiz-ud-Din Andihni,
„	Najib-ud-Din Sāhwi,
„	Najim-ud-Din Intishār,
„	Nasir-ud-Din Ghani,

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4. *Tārīkh-i-Fīrozshāhi*, by Zia-ud-Din Barni, pp. 341 ff.; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 38.

Maulāna	Nasir-ud-Din Karah,
„	Nasir-ud-Din Sabuli,
„	Nizām-ud-Din Kalāhi,
„	Rukn-ud-Din Sunnami,
„	Sadr-ud-Din Gandhak,
„	Sadr-ud-Din Tawi,
„	Salāh-ud-Din Satrki,
„	Shahā-ud-Din Multāni,
„	Shams-ud-Din Bāhi,
„	Shams-ud-Din Tum,
„	Tāj-ud-Din Kalāhi,
„	Tāj-ud-Din Maqdum,
„	Uhid-ud-Din Mulhu,
„	Zahir-ud-Din Bhakri,
„	Zahir-ud-Din Lang,
Qāzi	Fakhr-ud-Din Naqlah,
„	Iftikhār-ud-Din Rāzi,
„	Mughis-ud-Din Biānah,
„	Muhi-ud-Din Kashāni,
„	Shams-ud-Din Ghazruni,
„	Sharaf-ud-Din Sarbāhi,
„	Ujiya-ud-Din Paili,
„	Ujiya-ud-Din Rāzi. <sup>5</sup>

To crown all the celebrated saint,  
**Nizam-ud-Din Auliya and Shaikh Usman.** Nizām-ud-Din Auliya, and  
 his learned pupil Shaikh  
 Usmān (Maqdūm Sirāj-ud-Din), also belong

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5. *Vide Tārīkh-i-Fīrozshāhi*, by Zia-ud-Din Barni, pp. 341 ff.; *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 38; and *Zia Barni*, by Sayyad Hassan Barni, pp. 21 ff.

to this time. Posterity has exalted the tomb of the former to the dignity of a place of pilgrimage; whereas the latter has to his credit the reputation of having founded a big library which was removed to Lakhnauti (Gaur) after his death.<sup>6</sup>

It may also be pointed out here that at this time the study of philosophy and theology was zealously carried on under the auspices of some of the most learned theologians, and consequently, the *Qutb-ul Qalūb*, the *Ahyā-ul-Ulūm*, the *Kashf-ul-Māhjūb*, the *Sharha-i-Tārif* and the *Risāla-i-Qushiri* had an enormous vogue.<sup>7</sup>

In short, Delhi was at that time the heart to which the outlying cities were connected by arteries, through which streams of ideas flowed and distributed nourishment all round. Barni informs us that there was there at that time an intelligentsia, who surpassed even the pick of Bokhāra, Baghdād, Cairo, Damascus, Ispahān, and Tabrez—the renowned Muslim university-cities of the East.<sup>8</sup> Ferishta also

6. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 36 and 37.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

8 See *Tārikh-i-Firozshāhi*, by Zia-ud-Din Barni, pp 341, ff.

refers to Delhi as an important educational centre and says that 'palaces, mosques, universities, baths..... and all kinds of public and private buildings seemed to rise as if by magic. Neither did there in any age appear such a concourse of learned men from all parts'.<sup>9</sup> I have adduced the testimony of Barni and Ferishta; I may now quote a Hindu historian, who says that numerous learned men came flocking to Delhi,<sup>10</sup> which, one may venture to suggest, could compare very favourably with the great university-cities of the world. Not that all this was due to voluntary efforts, but that these, combined with the educational efforts of the Kings, had raised the standard of education to such a high level.

9. Brigg's Translation of *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. i, p. 376; and *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. vi, p. 385. The magic referred to above was the magic of Private Enterprise. "During the time of Sultān Alā-ud-din Delhi was the great *rendezvous* for all the most learned and erudite personages, for notwithstanding the pride and hauteur, the neglect and superciliousness and the want of kindness and cordiality with which that monarch treated this class of people, the spirit of the age remained the same", (i.e. literary). (*Vide History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. vi, p. 485). If in spite of the superciliousness of the Sultān and the neglect of the noble cause of learning attributed to him by some of the historians, the spirit of the age remained the same, it was certainly due to voluntary efforts.

10. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 37 and 38.



Contemporary chronicles are silent on the subject under discussion during the period scanning the interval between the end of the Khilji regime and the establishment of the Mughal Empire (at least I have not been able to find any evidence on the subject), except that when Bābar invaded India in 1526 A. C., he came across a library which belonged to Ghāzi Khān, an Afghān noble of the Punjāb. This library had in it some important theological works, which also attracted the attention of the invader, who is said to have sent some of them to his sons, Humāyun and Kāmran, for their use. Besides the books on theology, it contained 'a number of valuable books on other sciences.'<sup>11</sup>

Thus, from the evidence adduced above it is clear that besides the educational efforts made by the great Muslim rulers of India during the early Muslim Period, the patronage of learning and promotion of education by founding schools and colleges, were also undertaken with remarkable zeal and enthusiasm by many of the nobility and gentry. By the time, therefore, that the

**State of education in India on the eve of Bābar's invasion.**

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11. Talbot's *Memoirs of Bābar*, p. 176; and Erskine's *Memoirs of Bābar*, Vol. ii, pp. 171-72. Bābar says that he did not, on the whole, find so many books of value as, from their appearance, he had expected. (*Ibid.*)

Great Mughals began to rule in India, there must have already existed a large number of schools and colleges in almost all parts of Muslim India,<sup>12</sup> and in consequence therefore the standard of education must have been fairly high and the amount of literacy considerable. The statement recorded in the *Tuzk-i-Bābari* that there were no good colleges in India,<sup>13</sup> refers only to the closing years of the Sultānate of Delhi when the normal machinery of the Muslim Government stood idle and civic activities were thrown into abeyance as a sinister result of the misgovernment of the last King of the Lodhi Dynasty (Sultān Ibrāhim Lodhi) and the subsequent unrest caused by the Battle of Pānipat (1526 A. C.), but for which Bābar's opinion about the state of education in India at his advent cannot hold water.

12. Rev. Dr. Keay also comes to the same conclusion after dealing with the progress of education during the pre-Mughal period. (See his *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 120).

13. *Vide* Erskine's *Memoirs of Bābar*, Vol. i, p. 333; and Talbot's *Memoirs of Bābar*, p. 190.

## CHAPTER VIII

# PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN THE PROVINCIAL KINGDOMS

"Eminence in science is the highest of honours."

—Ali

"To respect the learned is to respect God."

—Ali

**Introductory.** I must now proceed to consider the progress of education in the outlying provincial kingdoms under the patronage of those prominent persons, who vied with one another and even emulated their kings in promoting education by founding *maktabs* and *madrasahs* and creating endowments for their maintenance, as well as in supporting the learned and supplying their material requirements.

**Educational efforts of the Sayyads of Rohri.** Turning to the kingdom of Sind, we learn that the cause of education found its reverant exponents in the Sayyads of Rohri, who were distinguished for their love of learning and their interest in the learned. Some of the colleges and establishments founded by them have survived to our own times and their minarets and domed roofs add to the picturesque appearance of that part of the

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1. For these sayings see *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, p. 360.

province.<sup>2</sup>

Among those military colonies, which **Multan as a seat of learning.** during the Arab occupation of Sind 'grew into flourishing cities and became centres of learning and culture', Multān was perhaps the most conspicuous. During the days of its independence as well as subjection to the Central Government, it possessed a superior standard of education, so much so that it attracted hosts of scholars from distant lands. Though there is very little documentary evidence at my disposal to show that it was an important centre of education during the Muslim rule, yet the presence of so many tombs of Muslim saints and scholars that stud the surface of that soil sufficiently testifies to the fact that it must have been noted, at one time, for the individual instructors of eminence who resided there. It was in fact an important asylum for all those literary persons who were ousted from their homes by the tyranny of their rulers. Shāh Shams Tabrez, whose tomb in Multān is now, not less than a place of pilgrimage, was, for instance, not merely the

2. "Rohri was formerly a place of great size and commercial importance, and contained large colleges and establishments of Sayyads and holy men. The minarets of these buildings and the domed roofs of the tombs add to the picturesque appearance of this part of Sind." (*Vide Land of the Five Rivers and Sind*, by David Ross, p. 68).

head of a religious order, but a poet of pure vigorous diction and sublime imagination. His name is enshrined in the roll of the great and glorious mortals whose lives form important landmarks in human history.<sup>3</sup>

Sadr-ud-Din Muhammad Hussaini, popularly called Banda Nawāz Gesu Darāz for his hospitality and Gesu Darāz for his long locks, was a famous saint of Kulbarga. In deference to his profound knowledge, both religious and secular, he was addressed to engage himself as a preceptor to Prince Ahmad Shāh. When the Prince ascended the throne, the saint's star was in the zenith, and it was a matter of great pride for the proudest peer of the realm down to the humblest servant of the State to carry out his smallest wishes. So supreme was his sway over the hearts and the minds of the people that 'his tomb became a pilgrimage to all sects'. Over and above the rôle he played as a private preceptor, his interest in education, as evidenced by the number of books he wrote, raises him to the rank of an enlightened educationist. Of his literary works, the *Adab-ul-Murid*, the *Wajud-ul-'Āshiqin* and the *Asmār-ul-Asar* are greatly

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3. *Mediæval India*, by Ishwari Prasad; *Punjab District Gazetteers*, Vol. VII, Part A—*Multan District* for 1923-24; and *Encyclopædia Britannica*.



admired.<sup>4</sup> When he died, Ahmad Shāh, the ruling prince, honoured him by founding and endowing a *madrasah* to his memory—an honour which he richly deserved as a lover of learning and a promoter of education. His son, Muhammad Akbar, was the author of the *Aqaid-i-Akbari*, so called after his own name. It contained the fundamental principles of the Muslim Religion.<sup>5</sup>

The Bahmanid Kingdom might justly be proud of having produced an outshining educationist, Mahmud Gāwān, who had great learning and ample judgment in the composition of prose and verse alike. He was an elegant writer of letters, an excellent author and an expert mathematician. The invaluable *Rauzat-ul-Insha*, the *Diwān-i-Ashar* and many other works from his prolific pen may still be found in some of the libraries of the Deccan. They were written with that clearness which is born of love and breeds love again. They are immortal not because they are the work of a genius, but because their themes are perennial. He was, in fact, so learned that Maulāna Abdur Rāhmān Jāmi regularly corresponded with him, and some of the

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4. Brigg's Translation of *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. ii, p. 388; and *Oriental Biographical Dictionary*, by Beale.

5. *Ibid.*

letters written to him by that renowned poet are still to be seen in his books.<sup>6</sup>

It was certainly in the sphere of education that he carved out a niche of undying fame, where his name will always shine with effulgent glory. Himself a man of vast knowledge and high literary tastes, too much stress cannot be laid on what he did for the promotion of education. His literary benefactions were so extensive that 'there was scarcely a town or city the learned men of which had not derived advantage out of him'.<sup>7</sup> His liberality was not confined to his own country alone, but extended even beyond the Bahmanid Kingdom. Ferishta gives us to understand that he used to send every year precious gifts and valuable presents to the learned men of Irāq and Khurāsān, for which he received high honours from the princes of those places.<sup>8</sup>

His name is preserved in history chiefly by a college founded by him in the city of Bidār and

**His literary  
benefactions.**

**Madrasah-i-  
Mahmud Gawan.**

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6. Briggs' Translation of *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*. Vol. ii, pp. 510 and 511; *Wāqiyāt i-Mumlikat-i-Bijāpur*, Bashir-ud-Din Ahmad, Vol. ii, pp. 109 and 110; *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 86-88; and *Making of India*, by A. Yusuf 'Ali, p. 87.

7. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 87.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87; and Briggs' Translation of *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. ii, pp. 510 and 514.

known after his own name as Madrasah-i-Māhmud Gāwān. When Ferishta saw it, it was so well intact as if it were just finished. It was equipped with a large library, containing, according to the same authority, as many as three thousand volumes for the use of its professors and students. It had an ornate mosque attached to it, so that religious education might be imparted side by side with secular learning.<sup>9</sup> Around the mosque there was a row of rooms for the residence of professors and students. Ferishta informs us that distinguished scholars of distant countries were conveniently accommodated there and provided with all the necessities of life gratis. With the permission of the ruling prince, who too seems to have been interested in educational matters, Gāwān issued invitations to the most accomplished scholars of the Age, intending to employ them as professors in his institution. Of these, two deserve specific mention, *viz.*, Maulāna Abdur-Rāhmān Jāmi, the most illustrious poet and scholar of Persia, whom he wanted to appoint as the principal of his

9. *Vide* Brigg's Translation of *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*. Vol. ii, p. 510 ff.. Also see Khāfi Khān's *Muntakhib-ul-Lubbāb*, Part II, p. 452, where he tells the story of how the *Imām* of the *Masjid*, attached to the *Madrasah*, escaped being struck by a thunderbolt, and *Wāqiyāt-i-Mumlikat-i-Bijāpur*, by Bashir-ud-Din Ahmad, Vol. ii, p. 109.

*Madrasah*; and Maulāna Muhammad Jalāl-ud-Din Davvāni, an author of many books and professor of the Madrasat-ul-Aitām at Shirāz. Unfortunately, however, Gāwān was bitterly disappointed, when all the scholars invited by him, got themselves excused on the plea of old age, arduous journey and other inconveniences involved in it. Had they accepted his invitation, he would have employed them as professors in his college, and under the ennobling influence of their erudition the standard of education and the extent of literacy in the Bahmanid Kingdom would have risen much higher than was otherwise possible.

Having failed to secure the services of the celebrated scholars, referred to above, Gāwān's choice fell on Shaikh Ibrahim Multāni, a well-known saint and scholar, who happened to be staying at Bidār at that time. Gāwān appointed him as the principal of his *Madrasah*. The Shaikh, in return, fully repaid the confidence reposed in him. Under him, Gāwān's College grew into a flourishing institution. It may be mentioned here that the Shaikh was such a saint and scholar that even the Princes of the Bahmanid Kingdom considered it an honour to be his disciples. In recognition of his learning and piety, he

**Shaikh Ibrahim  
Multāni chosen as  
the head of the  
Madrasah-Gawan**

was afterwards appointed as the Chief Qāzi of the Kingdom. The Shaikh was not the only one noted for his erudition; there were many other scholars of equal importance, working at the Madrasah-i- Māhmud Gāwān

Let us now turn to the building of the *Madrasah* itself. Of its perfection there can be no greater proof than this that it took a period of about three years to be completed at a cost of several *lakhs* of rupees; and of its solidity, this that it has successfully withstood the ruthless ravages of time and has preserved most of its former glory and grandeur which still exact spontaneous praise and admiration even from outsiders. But for an untoward incident which spoiled much of its original beauty (*vide infra*), it would have retained its challenging greatness untarnished and ranked amongst the most magnificent of its class in India. The following extract from the memoirs of Sir Richard Temple's travels from Kashmir to Hyderābād contains a reference to this building (*madrasah*), which strongly endorses the above view:—

“Of the ancient buildings of India now extant, this building (*madrasah*) is by far the best and unparalleled”.

The following couplet of Mullāh Sami'i, a contemporary poet of great celebrity, also



embodies it his view as to what this *Madrasan* once was:—

‘Built was the Madrasan to be a centre of learning,

Its foundation: “O God, accept from us”  
the chronogram bearing.’<sup>10</sup>

Another passage which describes this building runs as follows:—

“The noble college of Māhmud Gāwān in the city of Bidar”, says a modern historian, “was perhaps the grandest completed work of the period. It consisted of a spacious square with arches all round it, of two storeys, divided into convenient rooms. The minarets at each corner of the front were upwards of 100 feet high, and also the front itself, covered with enamel tiles, on which were flowers on blue, yellow and red grounds and sentences of the Qur’ān in large *Kufic* letters, the effect of which was at once chaste and superb.’<sup>11</sup>

Brigg’s note on this *Madrasah* is as interesting as it is informing. I cannot,

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10. S. Wajāhat Hussain has attempted a highly interesting account of Khwājāh Māhmud Gāwān, for which vide *J. A. S. B., LETTERS*, Vol. i, 1935, No. 2, Article No. 3, pp. 81 ff. For the above information I am indebted to the above article, as well as to *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta; History of Bahmani Dynasty* (1900); and *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson.

11. *History of India*, by Meadows Taylor, p. 185.

therefore, resist the temptation of quoting it in full:—

“After the capture of Bidār by Aurangzib, in the latter end of the seven-  
**Brigg's note on it.**      teenth century, this splendid range of buildings was appropriated to the double purpose of a powder-magazine and barrack for a body of cavalry, when by accident, the powder, exploding, destroyed the greater part of the edifice, causing dreadful havoc around. Sufficient of the work remains, however, even at the present day, to afford some notion of its magnificence and beauty. The outline of the square and some of the apartments, are yet entire and one of the minarets is still standing. It is more than 100 feet in height, ornamented with tablets on which sentences of the Qur'ān in white letters 3 feet in length, standing forth on a ground of green and gold, still exhibits to the spectator a good sample of what this edifice once was. The College is one of the many beautiful remains of the grandeur of the Bahmani and Burid dynasties, which flourished at Bidār; and they render a visit to that city an object of lively interest to all travellers, but particularly to those who may peruse this history.”<sup>12</sup>

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12. Vide Brigg's Translation of *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. ii, p. 510

Apart from this magnificent *Madrasah*,  
**Estimate of Mahmud Gawan's achievements.** Māhmud Gāwān executed with his own resources a large number of public works, the remains of which can still be seen in the Deccan. His crowning achievements stand out pre-eminent as a noble example of what a single individual, unaided and alone, can accomplish with his own limited resources for the good of humanity. Indeed he was imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice. His income was as huge as that of a prince, but his bounty was so large that on his death a very small sum of money was recovered from his coffers—a convincing proof, if proof is required, of his liberality and philanthropy. 'Plain-living and high-thinking' was his motto, devotion to humanity was his watchword; service—his ideal. His whole life was devoted to the uplift of his country, both moral and material. Murtaza Hussain has recorded in his *Hadiqat-ul-Aqlim* that thirty-five thousand copious works were obtained from his house on his death.<sup>13</sup> The College he founded is a monument to his memory.

The *Silsilah-i-Āsifiyāh* draws upon the  
**Tuitionary work of Daud Shah's son.** *Tuhfat-ul-Salātin* and states that a son of Dāud Shāh used to teach students for three days in a

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13. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 89 f. n. 1.

week: Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. In the course of study for his pupils he included books such as *Zāhidid*, *Sharh-i-Tazkirah* and *Tāhriri Uqlidas* (Euclid) in mathematics; *Sharh-i-Maqāsid* in theology; and *Mutāwwal* in rhetoric,—books he himself was very fond of.<sup>14</sup>

Munim Khān of Jaunpur was another notable figure of the fifteenth century. Some apartments near the Big Jaunpur Bridge, used for the residence and tuition work of a learned man, named Shaikh, are attributed to him. The inner apartments housed a *madrasah* and the outer apartments were let out. The rents derived from them defrayed the expenses of the teacher and the taught.<sup>15</sup>

Next in this account may be mentioned Bibi Rāji, the high-spirited wife of Māhmud Shāh of Jaunpur, who was no less celebrated. In the fifties of the fifteenth century, she constructed a *Jāmi'-Masjid*, a monastery and a *madrasah* in Jaunpur, and gave them the name of *Namāzgāh* (place of worship). She is stated to have assigned some stipends and scholarships

14. *Silsilāh-i-Asifiyah*, Vol. iii, p. 131; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 81; f. n. 1.

15. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 102

to the professors and students of her college.<sup>16</sup>

Rahim Dad of Gwālior also seems to have been a man of great learning and patriotic spirit. To him too is traced the foundation of a college in Gwālior. The existence of this college is supported by a statement in the *Tuzk-i-Bābari* (*Memoirs of Bābar*), which runs thus:—

“Having visited these places, I mounted my horse and went to the *college* founded by Rahimdād.<sup>17</sup>

In Bengal there lived several learned Musalmāns, who encouraged Islamic as well as Hindu learning. Numerous Bengālī works were translated into Persian and Sanskrit at the instance of Muslim Chiefs. They served to remove the supercilious spirit in which Bengālī was looked upon by the Sanskrit-loving Brāhmanās and the Hindu Rājās.’ The Hindu Rājās and Chiefs imitated the Muslim Sovereigns and *Amirs* in extending their patronage to Bengālī writers and poets. It was thus that the institution of keeping ‘Bengali Court Poets’ grew into fashion and

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>17</sup> Erskine's *Memoirs of Bābar*, Vol. ii, p. 338.



it was in this way that the *renaissance* of Bengālī literature was brought about. In consequence, therefore, education—both Muslim and Hindu,—made considerable progress in Bengāl under the patronage of Muslim Chiefs and others.

From all that has been stated above about the progress of education under Private Patronage, it is evident that the Musalmān educationists of the outlying provinces were little behind their rulers in patronizing learning and promoting education on their own account and that their laudable efforts were not limited to the extension of Islamic learning and education alone; towering above the trammels of religion and soaring above the snares of sectarian psychology, they, like their rulers, took an active interest in the promotion of provincial vernaculars and contributed to their development, so much so that it is never too much to say that the work done in the domain of education would have been, but for their efforts, a mere modicum of what was actually accomplished.<sup>18</sup>

18. *History of Bengal*, by Stewart, pp. 111, 113 and 408; *History of Bengali Literature*, by Dinesh Chandra Sen, pp. 10, 11, 12, 14, 140 and 222; and *Lwa's Promotion of Learning in India*, pp. 107 ff.

## CHAPTER IX

# PROGRESS OF EDUCATION DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD.

**He dieth not who taketh to learning.<sup>1</sup>**

—*Muhammad*

**Introductory.** It may incontrovertibly be asserted that the diffusion of education throughout the length and breadth of their empire was largely the result of personal interest taken in this direction by the Great Mughal Emperors, who were doubtless great as patrons of learning and remarkable as promoters of education, though the patronage of learning and promotion of education did not remain circumscribed to the Imperial House. The example set by them in this, as also in other spheres, was followed by the Mughal nobility and upper classes, whose interest might not have been genuine at all times, but whatever they did, whether as followers of fashion and flattery, or as lovers of learning and literature, had a

1. See *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, p. 360.

beneficial effect on literary pursuits. This was highly conducive to cultural development. For when a king takes a real personal interest in an art or education, he is readily imitated by his courtiers, and this influence further flows down to those who associate with them or come in contact with them. "This tendency," says Sir Abdul Qadir, "was particularly strong among the nobility of the Moghal Court." Writing about the '*Reign of Shah-jahan*', Mr. A. Aziz refers to this tendency in these words:—

'The Moghal nobility constituted a sort of agency through which the ideals of art and morals and manners were diffused among the lower classes..... The habits and customs of the people, their ideas, tendencies and ambitions, their tastes and pleasures, were often unconsciously fashioned on this model. The peerage acted as the conduit-pipe for this stream of influence. The patronage of art and culture followed the same lines; and even where the interest was not genuine the enlightened pursuits were followed and encouraged as a dogma dictated by fashion.'<sup>2</sup>

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2. Quoted from Mr. A. Aziz's *History of the Reign of Shahjahan* by Sir Abdul Qadir in his learned article on '*The Cultural Influences of Islam in India*', for which, vide *J.R.S.A.*, 10th January, 1936.

The value of the view expressed above by two distinguished scholars can be best appraised in the light of the ensuing account, from which it will be found that the educational work of the Mughal Emperors was reinforced, in a remarkable degree, by the laudable endeavours of the nobility and upper classes, who are justly entitled to a due share of honour.

Two instances of the achievements of private individuals during the reign of Humāyun can be cited. Shaikh Zain-ud-Din Hāfi was an author and poet of pure vigorous diction and towering imagination. The *Muntakhib-ut-Twārikh* records to his credit that 'he was unapproachable in his age in the construction of enigmas and chronograms, in extempore versification and in all the *minutiæ* of poetry and prose'. He set up a superb college at Delhi, within the precincts of which he was buried after his death. A school was also founded at Agra to perpetuate his memory.<sup>3</sup>

Besides these two institutions, it appears that the tomb of Hamāyun was also at one time used as

3. Ranking's Translation of *Muntakhib-ut-Twārikh*, Vol. I, pp. 610 and 611.

a place of instruction.<sup>4</sup> The fact that it housed a *madrasah* in its bosom at one time is corroborated by two European scholars in the following passages:—

“The college which is on the roof of the tomb, was at one time an institution of some importance, and men of learning and influence used to be appointed to the charge of the place. It has, however, long ceased to maintain its reputation, and for the last 150 years, the once probably well-filled rooms have been completely abandoned.”<sup>5</sup>

Fanshawe also supports the above statements when he says that ‘on the top of the building, round the drum below the dome, are a number of rooms and pavilions once occupied by a college attached to the mausoleum, and reminding one of the colony of St. Peter’s Dome’.<sup>6</sup>

One cannot help admiring Maham  
 College of Maham Ankāh, the foster-mother of  
 Ankah in Delhi. Emperor Akbar, who  
 established a college, with a mosque attached

<sup>4</sup> *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 134

<sup>5</sup> *Archæology of Delhi*, by Carr Stephen, p. 207.

<sup>6</sup> *Delh, Past and Present*, by Fanshawe, p. 232.



to it, at Delhi in the year 1561 A. C., and provided it with decent equipment and capable professors.<sup>7</sup> It was a splendid edifice built of 'rubble and plaster, with the ornamented parts painted by the use of red dressed stone and granite—the gate, now partly ruined, must have once been very fine. The *masjid* inside was profusely ornamented with coloured plaster and glazed tiles, though most of it has been stripped. The façade of the *masjid* and gateway was also ornamented with coloured medallions and carved stone flowers; the colours used were blue, yellow, red, purple, white, green, black, grey. It has one central dome on a low neck and very peculiar pinnacle, greatly resembling that of *Qil'a Kona Masjid*. The walls of the *masjid* are plumb, but the towers slope, and it has projecting caves in front as in *Moti-ki-Masjid*. A peculiarity of this was its cloisters'.<sup>8</sup> This noble offspring of voluntary effort and a crowning achievement of a female educationist is now in ruins; but the moribund cloisters are still to be seen in front of the western Gate of the Old Fort in Delhi.

7. *Āsār-us-Sanādīd*, by Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khān, p. 54, *Archæology of Delhi*, by Carr Stephen, p. 199 ff; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 165 ff.

8. *Vide Archæology of Delhi*, by Carr Stephen, p. 199.

Nothing sadder exists in India than this dilapidated *madrasah*—the silent witness of a great feminine achievement

Apart from the *madrasah* of Maham  
**Madrasah of** Ankāh, there was another  
**Khwaja Mu'in.** extant in Delhi at that time.  
 It was that of Khwāja Mu'in, wherein suitable professors were employed for the instruction of its students. One of the professors was Mirza Mufliṣ Samarqandi who taught in that institution for a period of about three years (1571—74 A. C.).<sup>9</sup>

Gujarāt continued to enjoy its literary  
**Voluntary Effort** fame throughout the Mughal  
**in Gujarat.** Period. In 1623 A. C. Muhammad Safi, its *Diwān*, founded a number of *madrasahs* in front of Fort Irk, and beside the Madrasah of Sayif Khān.<sup>10</sup> Sādiq Khān, who flourished there in the sixteenth century, was also an important educationist. He founded a *madrasah*, where the learned Shaikh Wajih-ud-Din used to teach. Wajih was buried within this

9. *Ma'āsir-i-Rahimi*, by Mullāh Abdul Bāqī, quoted by Law in his *Promotion of Learning in India*.

10. *Mirāt-i-Ahmadi*, by Ali Muhammad Khān. Vol. i. p. 209.

institution when he died in 1689 A. C.<sup>11</sup>

Next I may mention Khān-i-Khānān  
 Abdur Rahim, who also lived  
 about this time and took an  
 active part in the diffusion of  
 education on his own account. It is recorded  
 in the *Ma'āsir-i-Rahimi* that as many as  
 ninety-five learned men enjoyed his bounty and  
 many more sat at his feet for receiving lessons.  
 He possessed a big library, to which every one  
 could have free access for study and self-  
 improvement.<sup>12</sup>

**Library of Abdur  
 Rahim and his  
 students.**

The splendour of Shāh Jahān's glorious  
 architecture so ravished the  
 imaginations of contemporary  
 historians that they did not think there was  
 much else that could claim their attention.  
 Consequently we are left in the dark as to the  
 progress of learning and extension of education  
 at that time. Nevertheless, we have grounds  
 enough to say without being guilty of  
 overstatement that this period was not without  
 some educational institutions, befitting its  
 architectural grandeur. Maulāna Sadr-ud-Din  
 Khān Bahādur, Sadr-us-Saddur (Chief  
 Justice) of Shahjahānābād, was one of the

**Madrasah of  
 Sadr-ud-Din.**

11. *Ibid.*, Vol. ii, p. 45.

12. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N N. Law, p 168.

most important educationists of Mughal India. He is said to have infused new life and blood into the college which he got transferred to himself from a later Mughal King.<sup>13</sup>

The reign of Alamgir (Aurangzeb), noted as it was for the advancement of learning and literature under the encouragement of the Emperor, was no less distinguished for the progress of education under the patronage of private individuals. Akram-ud-Din, to quote one instance, built a *madrasah* at Ahmadābād in 1697 A. C. at a cost of one hundred and twenty-four thousand rupees, and in response to his request, he was given Siha and Sundra (two villages) by the Emperor for its maintenance.<sup>14</sup> There were other similar *maktabs* and *madrasahs*. Maulvi Abdul Hakim also founded a school in Siālkot, of which his son; Maulvi Abdullāh, became an eminent teacher.<sup>15</sup> Qāzi Rafi-ud-Din made a *madrasah* at Biānāh in 1670 A. C. in the vicinity of Qāzion-ki-Masjid.<sup>16</sup>

13. *Āsār-us-Sanādīd*, by Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khān, p. 69.  
 14. *Mirāt-i-Ahmadi*, by Ali Muhammad Khān, Vol. i, p. 363 and Vol. ii, p. 37.  
 15. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 189.  
 16. *Ibid*.

Another remarkable feature of Alamgir's reign was the increasing educational importance of the city of Siālkot in the Punjāb. **Sialkot as a centre of education in Alamgir's reign.** "During Aurangzib's reign", says Mr. N. N. Law, "Siālkot was a great seat of learning. Learned men from various parts of the country resorted to this place". Its importance as a centre of education was due partly to voluntary efforts and partly to the fact that paper was easily procurable there. It had a big manufactory of the *Mānsinghi* and silk paper, which was clean, durable and good in texture.<sup>17</sup>

In connection with the manufacture of paper, it may be mentioned here that paper was first brought into India by Musalmāns. **Introduction of paper in India by Musalmāns.** This was doubtless one of the most material contributions made by them to the cause of education in this country. It was most probably from China that paper was imported into Central Asia, where (in Samarqand) a big manufactory existed and supplied paper to various countries of the East, including India. It was from Samarqand that paper was first brought into

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17. *Ibid.*



India about the tenth century of the Christian era.<sup>18</sup>

Even amidst the waning glories of the Mughal Empire under the unfortunate successors of Aurangzeb, the spark of voluntary effort, lit in the cause of education, was not entirely extinguished. Thus during the reign of Emperor Bahādur Shāh, there were three private institutions in Delhi. **Madrasah of Ghazi-ud-Din** Ghāzi-ud-Din, a favourite officer of the late Mughal Emperor one of the principal stars of the present reign, constructed near the Ajmeri Gate at Delhi, a *madrasah*, a *masjid* and a *mausoleum*, all within the same enclosure, in his lifetime, combining in one place, a house of worship, a tomb of the founder and a place of instruction, with a residence for those in charge of the whole establishment.<sup>19</sup> A beautiful gateway will take the reader to this dilapidated enclosure. In the outer wall of this gateway he will find a number of arched-rooms which probably served as dining-rooms for the students of the college when it was in a flourishing state. In 1793 A. C. this institution

18. Vide Sir Abdul Qadir's article on '*The Cultural Influences of Islam in India*' in *The Hindustan Times*, dated January 13, 1936 and *J. R. S. A.*, 10th January, 1936.

19. *Mirāt-i-Ahmadi*, by Ali Muhammad Khān, Vol i. p. 410.

was closed for lack of funds.<sup>20</sup>

The name of Firoz Jang is also associated with a college, which he founded at Delhi about the year 1711 A. C.<sup>21</sup> At this time another *madrasah* existed in the city of Kanauj. It was called Fakhr-ul-Murrabbi. It was the *alma-mater* of Maulvi Alim-ud-Din and Maulvi Nasim-ud-Din, who were famous for their literary ability and attainments.<sup>22</sup> This institution should not be confused with another of almost the same name (*i. e.*, Fakhr-ul-Murrabbi Rub-ul-Mafakhir). The one within brackets was constructed at Firozābād, a little later, by Muhammad Wali-Ullāh, the author of the *Tārīkh-i-Farrukhābādi*.<sup>23</sup>

In spite of the anarchy and confusion, rampant at Delhi, consequent upon the misgovernment of Muhammad Shāh and the subsequent invasion of Nādir Shāh, there still existed, at this time, a bright feature, which merits consideration, *viz.*, encouragement accorded to education in

20. *Delhi, Past and Present*, Fanshawe, p. 64; Carr Stephen's *Archæology of Delhi*, p. 264. This college is now uninhabited. Also see Francklin's *Shāh Ālam*, p. 200.

21. *Mirāt-i-Ahmadi*, by Ali Muhammad Khān, Vol. i, p. 410.

22. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N N Law, pp. 195-96.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 195.

science by Rājāh Jai Singh of Ambar, who is reported to have laid out a number of observatories in Jaipur, Ujjain, Mathura, Benāres and Dehli. The Imperial Obsevatory, which survives to the present day, was constructed under his supervision at the instance of the Emperor.<sup>24</sup>

The reign of Emperor Bahādur Shāh also witnessed the foundation of a *masjid* and a *madrasah* by Sharaf-ud-Daulah,<sup>25</sup> a man of conspicuous literary distinctions. It is recorded in the *Tabsirat-ul-Nāzirin* that when Nādir Shāh invaded India and took possession of the Muslim Capital, he was seated in the 'Madrasah of Raushan-ud-Daulah'.<sup>26</sup> This incidentally points to the existence of another college. Thus there were, at this time, three noteworthy educational institutions flourishing in Delhi under private patronage.

The reign of Emperor Shāh Alam II was not without its intellectual luminaries. Hasan Raza Khān

**Madrasahs of  
Sharaf-ud-Daulah  
and Raushan-ud-  
Daulah.**

**Madrasah of Hasan  
Raza Khan.**

24. *Vide Delhi, Past and Present*, by Fanshawe, p. 247 ; and Carr Stephen's *Archæology of Delhi*, p. 269 ff

25. *Āsār-us-Sanādid*, by Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khān, p. 81 ; and *Wāqyāt-i-Dār-ul-Hukumat Dehli*, by M. Bashir-ud-Din Ahmad, Vol. ii, p. 203.

26. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 197-98. After plundering Delhi Nādir Shāh took away with him the Imperial Library which the Great Mughals had preserved as their 'most precious and proud possession

was, for instance, an eminent educationist. He founded at Farrukhābād, a *madrasah*, of which Abdul Wāhid Khānābādī was an illustrious professor.<sup>27</sup>

In the beginning of the eighteenth century there lived a wealthy zamindar at Barbhūm, called Abdullāh, who was a generous patron of letters. He is stated to have dedicated half of his income—an enormous sum—for the support of the learned as well as for other charitable purposes.<sup>28</sup>

At the end of the eighteenth century, a very learned scholar and author of not less than one hundred and fifty books, called Shaikh Nūr-ud-Din, opened a *madrasah* in Ahmadābād a year after his return from a pilgrimage to Macca and Medina, and himself took to the profession of teaching.<sup>29</sup>

Almost about the same time Khair-ud-Din Muhammad of Allāhābād, author of the *Tazkirat-ul-*

**Abdullah's  
educational  
achievement.**

**Madrasah of  
Nur-ud-Din.**

**Madrasah of  
Khair-ud-Din.**

Some of these books were subsequently sold in Persia at extremely low prices. (*Vide Miniature Painting and Painters of Persia, India, and Turkey*, Vol. i, pp 58-77 )

27. Hassan Raza Khān was a Minister of Nawāb Asaf-ud-Daulāh of Oudh. (*Vide Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 199.)

28. *History of Bengal*, by Stewart, p. 371.

29. *Tazkira-i-Ulāmā*, by M. Muhammad Hussain Azād, p. 57.

*Ulāma* (memoirs of the renowned scholars of Jaunpur), *Ibrat-Nāmāh*, *Gwālior-Nāmāh*, *Balwant-Nāmāh* and *Jaunpur-Nāmāh*, kept a *madrasah* at his native city till the sale of Kora and Allāhabād by the East India Company to Nawāb Shujā-ud-Daulā.<sup>30</sup>

Thus, there can be no doubt that the cause of education was taken up by private individuals during the Mughal Period quite as feelingly as by the Emperors themselves. Some of the colleges and libraries established by them have survived to our own times; whereas others have lost all marks of recognition at this distant date and cannot be identified as such.<sup>31</sup> Those that have survived afford ample proof of their pristine glory and grandeur, but those that are lying in ruin are known only by their names.

30. It will be interesting to have a glimpse of Khair-ud Din's scheme of a school in Jaunpur (where he had received his early education), submitted in his Memorial to Lord Wellesley appended to his *Tazkira*, wherein he suggests the appointment of five *maulvis*, four of whom were to be in charge of teaching subjects included in the curriculum. This may be regarded as a humble prototype of the *maktabs* and *madrasahs* flourishing during the sunny days of the Muslim rule. (*Vide Tazkirat-ul-Ulāma* translated by Sana-Ullah Khan.)

31. See *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law pp. 108 and 109.



CHAPTER X

DOMESTIC SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

AND

VILLAGE SCHOOLS

**"To the student who goes forth in quest of knowledge, God will allot a high place in the mansions of bliss; every step he takes is blessed, and every lesson he receives, has its reward."**

*—Muhammad*

**"No present or gift of a parent, out of all the gifts and presents to a child is superior to a good liberal education."**

*—Muhammad*

**"That a man gives a liberal education to his child is better for him than that he gives a large measure of corn in aims."**

*—Muhammad*

While we are still about the subject of the

**Introductory.**                      important contributions made  
by private bodies towards the  
cause of learning and education, I might, with propriety, give a brief account of the Domestic System of Education, which, I take it, is only a phase of the same movement. The Domestic System of Education went apace with the instruction in schools and colleges, not independent of or different from it in aim and character but existing side by side as a necessary corollary. Every house of a *Mullah*, *Maulana* or *Maulvi* was in itself

an important centre of culture and good breeding, which often provided board and lodging free to the students.<sup>1</sup>

**Domestic System of Instruction.** There were many who had not even entered the portals of a university and yet they were as remarkable for their learning and scholarship as those turned out by schools and colleges. This was because they were taught either by their fathers in their own houses, or by other learned men to whose houses they went and learnt lessons at whose feet: Their education was free from the formalities of a school-room. That they often became splendid scholars and eminent authors, worthy to be ranked with the best of their class, is indeed an important achievement of the Domestic System of Instruction, which is thus described in the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*:—

**The System as described in the Imperial Gazetteer of India.** “Elementary classes were included in the schools attached to mosques, but ordinary education was, as a rule, imparted at home. Householders of means engaged the services of a teacher to instruct their children in reading, writing and arithmetic. Persian

1. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law  
p 164

was the medium of instruction, and letter-writing and penmanship were highly prized accomplishments. The children learned to write on oblong boards, in appearance like a large edition of the horn-book, which could be washed clean at the close of the lesson. Less affluent neighbours were invited or allowed to send their children to the class, which sometimes attained the proportions of a small school. The schools were known as domestic *maktabs*, and the teachers were called '*maulvi sāhib*' or '*munshi sāhib*'. The profession was followed by both Muhammadans and Hindus. ..."<sup>2</sup>

As stated above, many an eminent scholar in those times owed his erudition to this unconventional Domestic System of Education. The author of the *Tārikh-i-Tāhiri*, a very learned scholar, received his early education in the house of his *ustād* (teacher) Māulāna Is'hāqi and studied Sa'adi, Jāmi, Khāqāni and Anwari with him.<sup>3</sup> Abdul Qādir, the renowned scholar and author of the *Tārikh-i-Badāoni* (*Muntakhib-ut-Twārikh*), who flourished in the time of Akbar, completed his course of studies in the house of his talented teacher,

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2. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. IV, p. 408.

3. *Vide History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. I, p. 253.

Mehr Ali Beg, in the city of Agra.<sup>4</sup> It appears that Allāma Abul Fazal and his brother, Faizi, the most consummate Perso-Sanskrit scholars that Muslim India could justly be proud of having produced, also owed their cradition to the Domestic System of Instruction. In Arabic and Persian they might have received their education either in state schools, where these languages were compulsory, or in their own house by their learned father, Shaikh Mubārīk, whose literary superiority was acknowledged even by his worst enemy, *viz.*, Abdul Qādir Badaoni. But, where did they acquire their proficiency in Sanskrit?—Either in state schools, which is a testimony to the fact that Sanskrit occupied a prominent place in the curricula, or in the houses of some Sanskrit scholars, which is a tribute to the Domestic System of Education.

Examples like these can be multiplied, but the few cited above will suffice to satisfy the curiosity of the inquisitive mind.<sup>5</sup>

The System of Domestic Education was  
 Its existence in the South. not confined to the North; it was in full swing in the South

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4. *Ibid.*, Vol V p 493; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law; p, 117.

5 See Maulāna Muhammad Hussain Azād's *Tazkirat-ul-Ulāma*, which teems with such instances of individual instructors of merit.

as well. Mr. Shoberl gives a somewhat graphic description of those schools which were held in the houses of the teachers in the Shiah Sultanates of the Deccan. He says:—

“The pupils sit cross-legged on the bench or on the floor. They write on paper with reed pens, or with tubes of some other kind. The paper mostly imported from China is not so good as that of Europe. It is smooth, very thin and easily tears.”<sup>6</sup>

It may be pointed out here that Mr. Shoberl describes the state of education in the South in those days when the sun of Muslim Supremacy had set.

There was another system of instruction in vogue in India at that time. **Village Schools in the North.** In almost every village there were some small schools in which reading, writing and arithmetic were taught to the children of all classes without restrictions of caste, colour or creed. The village school-master received his fees from his pupils usually in kind and was, as noted before, a fair prototype of the Village School-Master immortalized by Goldsmith in his *Deserted*

6. *Vide Hindustān in Miniature*, by Shoberl, Vol. IV. pp. 215 and 216; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 96.



*Village.*<sup>7</sup> Mr. N.N. Law, on the authority of the *Khurshid-i-Jahān Numa*, asserts that towards the end of the eighteenth century there were small educational institutions at Silāpur in Bengāl, where both Hindus and Musalmāns received education in Arabic and Persian.<sup>8</sup> “Max Muller, on the strength of official documents and a missionary report concerning education in Bengal prior to the British occupation, asserts that there were then 80,000 native schools in Bengal, or one for every 400 of the population.”<sup>9</sup> These schools must have been of the kind of those described above. Their number is remarkable indeed.

Such small educational institutions existed  
in the villages of Southern  
**In the South.** India as well. While dwelling

7. In the good old days of the ‘Village Republics’ there was always provision in each village for a School-Master along with other functionaries of the Village Service. This was confirmed by Sir Thomas Munro, who gave evidence before both the Houses of Parliament in 1813 A. C. to the effect that there were schools in every Indian village and that the people were well-versed in the rudiments of the three R’s. To these institutions was rightly ascribed the general efficiency of the natives as scribes and accountants. They were flourishing till the close of the eighteenth century but are now dying out for want of sympathy and support (See ‘India in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.)

8 *Vide Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 113

9 *India, Impressions and Suggestions*, by J. K. Hardie p. 5.

upon the state of civilization there, Mr. Fergusson informs us that 'education in Persian and Arabic literature was extended as much as possible by village schools, which were attached to mosques and endowed with lands sufficient for their maintenance'.<sup>10</sup>

The importance of the systems of education described above cannot be exaggerated. They have been extant in India since the advent of Islām, especially for such branches of arts and sciences as music, painting and calligraphy, and for proficiency in a particular art. Big institutions like schools and colleges did not always make provision for artistic training and hence we find a student of music, painting, etc., receiving his lessons in the house of his teacher.<sup>11</sup>

I have already described the prevalent practice of performing the time-honoured *Maktab Ceremony* among the Muslim Kings when their sons attained the age of 'four years, four months, and four days,' and when the infant princes were admitted into schools and commended to the care of their appointed preceptors for instruction in various arts and sciences, with due

**Importance of the systems of education described above.**

**Maktab Ceremony.**

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10. *Architecture at Bijapur*, by Fergusson, p. 12.

11. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 117.

ceremonies.<sup>12</sup> Rev. Dr. Keay observes that this custom was followed by the nobility and the gentry as well.<sup>13</sup> His view is endorsed by another modern writer, who, while writing about the "*Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustān*" during the early Muslim Period (1200—1550 A. C.), remarks that "the education of the child received particular attention. He was put to school or rather under a tutor with picturesque ceremonies." According to this writer, the *Bismillāh-Khāni*, or otherwise the ceremony of putting a boy to school for the first time, also known as *Maktab Ceremony*, was performed amidst a shower of acclamations and good wishes for the novice when he attained the age of 'four years, four months, and four days,' when at an auspicious hour fixed in consultation with an expert astrologer, he received his first lesson from his tutor.<sup>14</sup> The performance of this ceremony was seen by Mr. L. F. Smith in 1801 A. C. among the Musalmāns of the North-Western Provinces. He described it

12. Vide *Ancient Indian Education*, by Rev. Dr. Keay, p. 130 ; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 128 and 141.

13. Vide *Ancient Indian Education* by Rev. Dr. Keay, p. 132.

14. K. M. Ashraf's contribution on the *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustān*, (1200—1550 A. D.)—(Based mainly on Islamic Sources) to *J. A. S. B., Letters* Vol. 1. 1935, Article No. 3, p. 249

in a letter in the following words :—

“When the boy is four years, four months, four days old, for him a silver slate is made and they write on it the *Surāh-i-Iqra*, a chapter of the *Qur’ān*, and make him repeat it; at this time, a master is kept for him.”<sup>15</sup>

Thus it is evident that the *Maktab Ceremony*, or *Bismillah-Khāni*, was in vogue not only during the Mughal period, but existed even before and after it. It was in fact so deep-rooted that it has survived to our own times and is commonly found among the Musalmāns of India in these days.

In view of the facts given above, I may conclude with reasonable certitude that a regular education was given to the Muslims as well as others in India during the Muslim Rule, and an examination of the *modus operandi* of the system adopted has made it amply clear that side by side with Court Patronage private individuals have borne no mean share of the *onus* of responsibility for the promotion of education in Muslim India. It does not matter whether they took a prominent part in the propagation of education only in order to please the ruling prince who happened to be

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15. See L. F. Smith's Appendix to *Chahār Darwish*, p 253.

highly interested in the educational advance of his people, or 'followed and encouraged enlightened pursuits as a dogma dictated by fashion', or because they were really interested in the advancement of education. Taking the amount of educational work done by them and appraising it as it stands, regardless of their motives, it appears to have been wholly beneficial, and for this they amply deserve our esteem and admiration.



**PROGRESS OF EDUCATION—III**  
**CONNECTED TOPICS**



## CHAPTER XI

### ROYAL EDUCATION

**"Knowledge is life and wealth." 1**  
—Ali.

**Introductory.** The emperors, who were so anxious about the education of their subjects, were no less interested in the education of their own sons. So, here it will not be out of place to have a glimpse of the education that was imparted to the imperial princes. It must, however, be acknowledged at the outset that a complete account of the education of every prince of the period is impossible, both on account of the paucity of material on the subject and the scarcity of space at my disposal. Nevertheless, the following account, however meagre and perfunctory, will throw sufficient light on the subject and on the principles and practices pertaining thereto.

**Shahab-ud-Din's interest in the education of his adopted sons.** Having no male issue of his own, Sultān Shahāb-ud-Din Ghori adopted his slaves as his sons and took great delight in their education. Apart from giving them a

1. See *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, p. 560.

sound literary education, he instructed them in the art of practical administration which was absolutely indispensable to prospective princes.<sup>2</sup> That some of them, such as Aibak, Bakhtiyār and Qabāicha, rose to be the remarkable rulers of his dominions after his death, bears glowing testimony to the type of education he had given them. Minhāj-i-Sirāj records that on one occasion when one of his courtiers reminded him of the faults and failures of his heirs, he told him with absolute indifference that he had many thousand sons, *viz.*, his Turkish slaves, who would be the heirs of his dominions after his death and who would preserve his name in the *khutba* throughout his territories.<sup>3</sup> This was not an empty boast. The prognostication proved only too true and is fully illustrated by the story of the Slave Dynasty which ruled in India with success for about a century. Such was the kind of education he had imparted to his adopted sons.

Education of  
Sultana Razia  
and Prince  
Mahmud.

Altamash (Iltutmish) spared no pains in so far as the education of his children was concerned. He gave a decent education to his daughter, Razia Begum, and there is no

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2. Brigg's *Translation of Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. p. 200; and Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 18.

3. *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta* (Urdu), Vol. i, p. 98.

doubt that many of her noble qualities she owed to her education. He made special arrangements for the instruction of his son, Mahmud, and fixed his residence at Loni, which was quite in keeping with his princely dignity. That the Prince was educated in a most befitting manner is borne out by the fact that he had become thoroughly conversant with various arts and sciences at an early age.<sup>4</sup>

Balban was also very keen and careful about the education of his sons: Muhammad, the pioneer of literary societies, and Kurra Khan Bughra, the founder of the first dramatic society in the kingdom. The literary as well as artistic attainments of these two princes have been recorded in a previous chapter of this book and there is no need to repeat them here. It may, however, be said here that Prince Muhammad was taught under the tuition of Amir Khusrau, the most prominent poet and scholar of the day.<sup>5</sup>

4. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 21 and Revery's translation of *Tabqāt-i-Nāsiri*, p. 670.

5. *Siyyar-al-Mutākhkhirin*, by M. Ghulam Hussain (Persian), Vol. i, p. 111. For an account of Prince Muhammad's education, see *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson Vol. iii, p. 565.



Almost all the princes of the Tughluq Dynasty were carefully educated by their fathers in the arts of war as well as of peace. Sultān Ghiyās-ud-Din, the founder of the House, seems to have left no stone unturned in teaching his son, Juna Khān (Muhammad Tughluq), in every branch of knowledge. According to Ferishta the Prince was taught by Maulāna Azād-ud-Din and Kutlaq Khān. The same authority further informs us that the latter had instructed him in the Holy Qur'ān, in some Persian books as well as in the art of writing.<sup>6</sup> It is also reasonable to suppose that he had instructed the Prince in his military exercises, for he was as much a man of letters as of war. It was undoubtedly owing to his excellent education, received at an early age, that the Prince became 'the Wonder of the Age' and 'the most learned man among the crowned heads of the Middle Ages.' It is impossible to do full justice to his many-sided achievements in literary knowledge. Enough that he was endowed with such a versatility

Literary and  
military  
education of  
Muhammad  
Tughluq.

6. *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta* (Urdu), Vol. i, pp. 191-92 M. Bashir-ud-Din also mentions in his history of the Kingdom of Bijapur, Kutlaq Khān as Muhammad Tughluq's teacher. (*Vide Wāqiyāt-i-Mumlikat-i-Bijāpur*, by M. Bashir-ud-Din Ahmad, Vol. ii, p. 299.)

of mind and intellect as is rarely met with in a mortal.<sup>7</sup>

Himself a learned scholar, Muhammad Shāh Tughluq took upon himself to educate his cousin, Firoz Shāh Tughluq, whom he intended to be his successor. We are informed that Firoz was trained in the art of administration by both of his immediate predecessors, viz., Muhammad Shāh and Ghiyās-ud-Din.<sup>8</sup> In his turn, Firoz also discharged his duty of educating the heir-apparent, which was, so to say, a family legacy, in a most befitting manner. According to Ferishta he appointed able *atāliqs* (private tutors), *atābaks* (masters, specially in military sciences) and *qāidā-dāns* (grammarians) for his son, Fath Khān, and assigned him a separate *Bargāh* (palace). The Prince used to read and write in a *maktab* from early morn till breakfast time and from evening till late at night."

Sultān Sikandar Lodhī, who was a poet of some genius and a scholar of some ability, too appears

**Sikandar Lodhī's  
literary education.**

7. *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta* (Urdu) Vol. i, pp. 191-92; and *Siyyar-ul-Muta'akhkhirin*, by Ghulām Hussain, Vol. i, p. 124. Also see *Travels of Ibn Batuta*, translated by Gibb, p. 227.

8. *Tārīkh-i-Hindustān*, by M. Zaka-Ullah, Vol. ii, p. 162.

9. *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta* (Urdu), Vol. i, p. 162.

to have been effluently educated. His teacher in the *Mizān* was Shaikh Bahā-ud-Din, a very learned man of the day, and his preceptor in poetry was Shāh Jalāl, a prominent poet and author of his time.<sup>10</sup>

Sultān Ghiyās-ud-Din II of Bengal, who ruled there from 1367 to 1373 A. C., was a highly cultured prince. He must have received a good education, about which, unfortunately, we know only so much that his tutor was Hamid-ud-Din of Nāgore, a most learned theologian of his time, and that the only fellow-student with whom he used to study, was the celebrated saint Qutb-ul-'Ālam, to whose memory Sultān Hussain Shāh established a most magnificent *madrasah*.<sup>11</sup>

The princes of the Bahmanid Kingdom also were given good education by their fathers. Muhammad Shāh Bahmani, who wielded the sceptre of the Bahmanid Kingdom from A. C. 1463 to 1482, was, for instance, a highly educated prince. He received his early education under the supervision of one Khwājā-i-Jahān, who appointed a distinguished scholar of

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10. *Ibid.*, p. 211; and Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 73.

11. Stewart's *History of Bengal*, p. 111; and Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 108.

his time, called Sadr-i-Jahān Shustāri, as his teacher. Under the tuition of this learned teacher, the prince made so great a progress in his studies that he became, in course of time, the most learned king of the Bahmanid Kingdom, next only to Sultān Firoz Shāh Bahmani.<sup>12</sup>

**Bābar's early education.** Bābar must have received an excellent education during his early life, for we know that he had very little time, later on, to equip himself with the intellectual attainments he is un-animously believed to have possessed in abundance. Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole's remarks in this connection are worthy of a quotation. Says he:—

**Lane-Poole on his education.** "At the age of five the child (Bābar) was taken on a visit to Samarqand. ....The next six years must have been spent in education and well spent, for he had little leisure (later on) to improve himself, and his remarkable attainments in the languages he wrote imply steady application. Of his early training we hear nothing, but it is reasonable to suppose that an important part of it was due to the women of his family."<sup>13</sup>

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12. Brigg's Translation of *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. ii, p. 477.

13. *Bābar*, by Stanley Lane-Poole, p. 22.

Humāyun's education and tastes, like those of his father, were almost entirely Persian. About his early education, no elaborate details are available. The little we know is that when he attained the age of 'four years, four months and four days', the *Maktab Ceremony* was performed for celebrating, according to the then existing custom, the occasion of his admission into a school for the first time. At that time he was seated in a *maktab* and entrusted to the care of his teachers in a formal manner. Endowed as he was with a wonderful memory, he soon acquired proficiency in all those arts and sciences which were taught to him.<sup>14</sup>

I might, with propriety, take this opportunity of throwing some light on Akbar's literary education. The concurrent testimony of historians has painted him illiterate. I do not subscribe to this view. On the other hand, I firmly believe that he was literate and well-read in various arts and sciences.

To begin with his early education. It can be gathered from contemporary accounts that his father, Humāyun, was particularly keen about his

**Humayun's admission into a school and the performance of Maktab Ceremony.**

**Was Akbar illiterate?**

**His early education.**

14. Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 128.



education. According to the prevalent custom, when he attained the age of 'four years, four months and four days,' he was admitted into a school and the *Maktab Ceremony* was gone through. This took place in the year 1547 A. C. At that time Maulāna Aziz-ud-Din was entrusted with the responsibility of teaching him. Aziz-ud-Din was superseded by Maulāna Bāyazid and he, in his turn, by many more. Then Mir Abdul Latif, the most consummate historian, philosopher and theologian of the day, was invited to instruct him in various arts and sciences. Moreover, with his own knowledge of astronomy, the fond father had himself fixed the fortunate moment of his son's admission into the school. This attests the Emperor's anxiety for educating his son. Again, it is not at all likely that Khān Bāba (Bairam Khān), a later *atāliq* (guardian) of the young prince and a man of unmixed loyalty, would have neglected the education of his master's son and his own future sovereign. The fact is that he acquitted himself creditably; he left no stone unturned to instruct him in the divers branches of knowledge. It was he who appointed Mir Abdul Latif as his teacher. We are informed that Mullāh Asām-ud-Din, Ibrāhim, Pir Muhammad and Hāji Muhammad Khān were also his instructors. Maulāna Muhammad

Hussain Azād has mentioned in his *Darbār-i-Akbari*, Maulāna Abdul Qādir as another tutor to the young prince. Furthermore, it is distinctly recorded in the *Ain-i-Akbari* that Shaikh Abdun-Nabi and Abdullāh Makhdum-ul-Mulk were his religious preceptors.<sup>15</sup>

From the preceding paragraph it is quite clear that Akbar's literary education commenced in 1547 A. C., when the *Maktab Ceremony* was performed, and continued to the death of his father, which took place in 1556 A. C. During these eight years Humāyun was supremely solicitous about his son's education. The appointment of efficient teachers as well as the dismissal of mere mediocres testifies to his care in this direction. Further still, we have it from the *Darbār-i-Akbari* that in 963 A. H. (1585 A. C.) the Emperor (Akbar) himself began to read the *Diwān-i-Hāfiz* with Mir Abdul Latif Qazwini.<sup>16</sup>

15 Briggs' Translation of *Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. ii, pp. 193-94 and 201; Noer's *Akbar*, Vol. ii, pp. 125-27; Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, pp. 140-42; Elphinstone's *History of India*, Vol. ii, p. 262; and M. Muḥammad Hussain Azād's *Darbār-i-Akbari*, p. 112.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 113. According to M. Zaka-Ullāh, Akbar was illiterate in his early life but acquired full proficiency in reading and writing in his mature age. The books he used to read, says the Maulānā, were preserved by his descendants as sacred relics. (*Vide* his *Tārīkh-i-Hindustān*, Vol. v, pp. 771-72.)

There is no denying the fact that Akbar was endowed with a singularly romantic and receptive mind. He could easily imbibe and assimilate knowledge that was imparted to him by his teachers. In this case one is apt to agree with the writer who says that 'a month snatched out for studies out of the whole period of training, or devoted to them under the fear of his teachers and guardians, could no doubt have enabled him to read and write the alphabet, which even the dullest boy does not take long to master'.<sup>17</sup> That he was very fond of sports in his early life, is admitted on all hands, but I for one cannot understand how a boy, with a memory so marvellous and a mind so impressionable, could so systematically resist the efforts of his father for full eight years and those of his *ataliqs* for five years, and come out at the end of the period as blank as he is painted. And one finds it difficult to believe that a man like Humāyun, who himself was a learned scholar, would have neglected the education of his beloved son; and a son, who rose to be the greatest sovereign of India, cannot be said to have been ignorant of the alphabet.

**Improbabilities  
of his illiteracy.**

17. *Vide Law's Promotion of Learning in India*, pp. 207.

I may now quote direct evidence from the *Ain-i-Akbari* and other contemporary chronicles in support of my contention. It is recorded in the *Āin* that His Majesty (Akbar) used to hear the recitation of important books by court-scholars and paid them according to the number of pages they recited in his presence. On the last page of the book under perusal he would himself write in numerals, with his own pen, the total number of pages, and put down the date where the reader stopped.<sup>18</sup> This of course obviously ascribes to His Majesty a fair knowledge of numerical figures and their daily transcription by his own hand, with his own pen. Here then it must be remembered that in those days, as also in these days, there was a common custom of making a novice learn and write the numerals along with or even subsequent to the alphabet.

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18. The original text is this:— "Wa har rūz ke badān jā rasad bā shumār-i-ān hindisah baqalami-i-gauharbar naqsh kunad. Wā ba 'ādād-i-aurāq khwānandāh rā naqd az surkh wa sufaid bakhshish shwad." Translation:— "Whatever place (of the book) the reader daily reached, he (Akbar) wrote with his own pearl-pouring pen, numerical figures according to the number of leaves (read). He paid the readers cash in gold or silver according to the number of leaves (read)." Here the word '*hindisah*' means numerical figures. The translators of the original text have taken it to mean 'sign' which is wrong. Likewise '*qalam-i-gauharbār*' means: pearl-pouring pen or prolific pen and not 'jewelled pen', as translated by them. (Also see Gladwin's *Āin*, p. 85.)

Evidently he could read and write, though his penmanship may not be pitched very high. His son, Jahāngir, informs us that he was competent enough to weigh and to express his opinion on any topic; that he understood the elegances of poetry and prose so thoroughly that there was hardly any one who could equal him in this respect.<sup>19</sup> He was a poet himself and could spin verses of no mean merit. Some of his verses have been preserved by 'Allāma Abul Fazal and other historians of his reign. He was a fastidious critic of poetry and could improve upon the verses of other poets.<sup>20</sup> He was a great book-lover. Under his auspices, the Imperial Library was augmented with several important works, and under his direction was the entire system of education reformed. Some of the most important and interesting books were kept in the Imperial *Harem* for his own use. He loved and prized the society of *gens de lettres*, appreciated their learned discourses, enjoyed their abstruse controversies, understood the niceties and excellences of their compositions and himself took an active

19. Price's Translation of the *Wāqiyāt-i-Jahāngiri*, p. 44-5; Lowe's Translation of the *Tuzk-i-Jahāngiri*, p. 26; and *Tuzk-i-Jahāngiri*, translated by Beveridge and Rogers, p. 33.

20. Elliot and Dowson's *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. iv, p. 294; and Brigg's Translation of *Tārikh-i-Ferishta*, Vol. ii, p. 280.



part in their discussions<sup>21</sup>—All this lends support to my statement.

As to what is responsible for such a grave misreading of an historical fact, I have discovered four things: Those who maintain that Akbar was illiterate rely, first, upon a statement of the *Iqbāl-nāmāh*, which reads that the Emperor was 'ummi';<sup>22</sup> secondly, upon a sentence of the *Wāqiyāt-i-Jahāngiri*, which says that Akbar 'had acquired such knowledge of the elegance of composition both in pros and verse that a person not acquainted with the circumstances of his elevated character and station might have set him down as profoundly learned in every branch of science';<sup>23</sup> thirdly, upon the evidence of the Portuguese Missionaries, which states that 'he could neither read nor write';<sup>24</sup> and lastly upon a statement of Von Noer, which paints Akbar as 'uneducated'.<sup>25</sup>

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21. Price's Translation of the *Wāqiyāt-i-Jahāngiri*, pp. 44-45.

22. *Tuzk-i-Jahāngiri*, translated by Lowe, p. 26, by Rogers and Beveridge, p. 33.

23. Price's Translation of the *Wāqiyāt-i-Jahāngiri*, pp. 44-45.

24. Fr. A. Monserrate's *Account of Akbar* (26th November 1582), edited and translated by Rev. H. Hosten from Portuguese into English in *J. A. S. B.*, p. 194 (1912); and Fr. Jerome Xavier's statement in his letter, dated 1598 A. C. translated by Beveridge in the *J. A. S. B.* (1896), p. 77.

25. Noer's *Akbar*, Vol. ii, pp. 56 and 243.

Evidence in support of Akbar's illiteracy is false.

Taking the first: '*Ummi*' is an Arabic word and has more than one meaning. The translators of the original Persian text have taken it to mean illiterate, which meaning is accepted by almost all modern historians, who have little acquaintance with the original sources, at its face value, without thinking for a moment that it is capable of a different interpretation. I take it to mean taciturn,<sup>26</sup> which is also one of its meanings, and is at once in accord with the information adduced above. The statement in the *Wāqiyāt-i-Jahāngiri* does not say that the Emperor was absolutely illiterate; it only states that he was not 'profoundly learned'. The statements of the Catholic Missionaries, who resided at the Imperial Court and wrote that the Emperor 'could neither read nor write', I make bold to challenge their veracity. The information that we derive from the accounts of Xavier and Monserrat deserve our respect and admiration for supplementing the history of the period under consideration (Mughal India) in certain details; but in case it is contradicted by the cumulative testimony of men like Abul Fazal, Faizi and others, its authenticity

26. *Muhit-ul-Muhit*, Voi. ii, p. 40; and Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 211.

must needs be called in question. Personally, I am inclined to think that to inquire into Akbar's literacy or illiteracy was well-nigh impossible for the foreign missionaries who always found themselves in the strange environments of suspicion at the Mughal Court, which would not at all entertain inquiries about the person of the Emperor, e.g. to inquire whether or not he was educated. Necessarily therefore their information must have been based on hearsay evidences and should therefore be appraised as such. Monserrat himself has confessed that the material stocked in his book is not first-hand. This will be evident from the following passage:—

“As to the particulars concerning Cingus-sican, Temurbeg, the Scythians and the Mongols (*i. e.*, the Mughals), which I, so to say, borrowed and inserted after my narrative, at the end of the book, I learnt them, in the first place, from Zelaldin himself, then from a journal containing an account of the travels of a certain ambassador of Henry IV, King of Castile, to Temur; finally from writers of no mean merit.”<sup>27</sup>

That the information we get from the accounts of the Portuguese Missionaries

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27. *M. A. S. B.*, Vol. iii, No. 9, p. 520.

is not always entirely correct, is true. For instance, Rev. H. Hosten has pointed out a number of inaccuracies in the accounts of Father Monserrat<sup>28</sup>. To these inaccuracies may be added the present one—Akbar's illiteracy.

Finally, it must be remembered that the information of Von Noer is based on the authority of a Goanese, *i.e.*, a Portuguese missionary resident of Goa.<sup>29</sup> As such it cannot be accepted as correct.

Thus there can be no doubt that if literacy means ability to read and write, Akbar was literate; and if the end of education is acquisition of knowledge and intellectual improvement, he was undoubtedly 'profoundly learned' and 'most highly educated'.

Akbar was vitally interested in the education of his sons. He displayed his wonted insight and acumen in the selection of their teachers, and appointed reputed scholars for superintending their studies. In 1579 A.C., when Qutb-ud-Din Muhammad was engaged to educate his son Salim (Jahāngir), a grand levee was held and the teacher, in accordance

**Akbar's interest in the education of his sons and grandsons.**

28. J. A. S. B., (1912), p. 202, f. n. 4; p. 206, f. n. 5; p. 207 f. n. 11; and p. 210, f. n. 3.

29. Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 139; and Noer's *Akbar*, Vol. ii, pp. 56 and 243.

with the custom of the day, presented valuable articles to the Emperor and received richer in return. Then amidst a shower of acclamations he took his ward, the young prince, on his shoulders and ordered dishfuls of jewels and gold *mohars* to be thrown among the people. At that time Salim was about five years old. His other tutors were Mirza Abdur Rahim, Shaikh Ahmad and Maulāna Mir Kalān Harvi, *Muhaddis* (traditionist) of Herāt. He was also put under the tuition of Christian missionaries to be instructed in western arts and sciences. The teachers of Murād and Dāniāl were Abul Faiz (Faizi) and Sa'id Khān Chaghtāi, respectively. Hugh says that Murād was for some time placed under the instruction of Monserrat 'to be instructed in the sciences and religions of Europe'. According to Count Noer the Emperor appointed Abul Fazal and a Brāhmin for the education of one of his grandsons.<sup>30</sup>

Shāh Jahān too took a good care to provide for the education of his sons and grandsons. Of his four sons, Dara and Aurangzeb were particularly noted for their literary

Education of Shah  
Jahan's sons and  
grandsons.

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30. *Akbarnāmah*, (Beveridge), Vol. iii, pp. 107, 299 and 401; and *History of Jahāngir*, by Beni Prasad, pp. 20-21.



acquirements. Dāra, whose scholarly achievements have been summed up elsewhere, was taught by eminent teachers. Mullāh Shah,<sup>31</sup> whom Shāh Jahān honoured and respected more than any other person, was his *Murshid* or spiritual guide. His son, Sulaimān Shikoh, was taught under the tuition of Kāzi Ibrāhim Thati, a very learned man of his time.<sup>32</sup>

Like all other Mughal Princes, Aurang-  
Alamgir's early education. zeb too received his education at an early age. His first tutor was Sa'adullah Khān, the most erudite scholar of his father's reign. His other teachers were Mullāh Sāleh and Mir Muhammad Hāshim. He was not, however, satisfied with the kind of education imparted to him by his early teachers. This is evident from the reproof he is said to have administered to his old teacher,<sup>33</sup> when the latter hastened

31. "Mullah Shāh, a native of Badakhshan, was the *Murshid* or spiritual guide of Dāra Shikoh and was highly respected by Shāh Jahan.....He may be Mullāh Sāle of Bernier's narrative, and have taught Aurangzeb also. I possess a very fine contemporary portrait, by a Delhi artist, of Dāra's teacher who was one of the disciples of Mian Shāh Mir of Lahore....." (*Vide Bernier's Travels* p. 154, note 2.)

32. See *Siyyār-ul-Mutāakhhirin*, by Ghulām Hussain, Vol. i, pp. 290-91, where the author tells the story of one Shaikh Nazir, who visited Qāzi Ibrāhim in the *maktah*, where he was teaching Prince Sulaimān Shikoh.

33. According to Bernier and Manucci this teacher was Mullāh Sāleh (*vide Bernier's Travels*, Constable's Edition, p. 154 and *Storia do Mogor*, by N. Manucci, Vol. ii, p. 30); but

to the Capital to congratulate his old pupil who now held the sceptre in his hand. Having taxed the venerable preceptor of his boyhood, who, with his utter ignorance of the history and geography of the world and the relative importance of European states, seems to have given him a meagre sort of education, the Emperor reprimanded him in these words : —

“ . . . . Was it not incumbent upon my preceptor to make me acquainted with the distinguishing features of every nation of the earth ; its resources and strength ; its mode of warfare, its manners, religion, form of government, and wherein its interests principally consist ; and by a regular course of historical reading, to render me familiar with the origin of states, their progress and decline ; the events, accidents, or errors, owing to which such great changes and mighty revolutions have been effected ? Far from having imparted to me a profound and comprehensive knowledge of the history of mankind, scarcely did I learn from you the names of my ancestors, the renowned founders of this empire. You kept me in total ignorance of their lives, of the events which preceded,

**His lengthy  
discourse on the  
subject of  
education.**

Sir Jadunath Sarkar does not accept this as correct, (*vide* his *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. i, p. 4).

and the extraordinary talents that enabled them to achieve their extensive conquests. A familiarity with the languages of surrounding nations may be indispensable in a king; but you would teach me to read and write Arabic; doubtless conceiving that you placed me under an everlasting obligation for sacrificing so large a portion of time to the study of a language wherein no one can hope to become proficient without ten or twelve years of close application. Forgetting how many important subjects ought to be embraced in the education of a prince, you acted as if it were chiefly necessary that he should possess great skill in grammar, and such knowledge as belongs to a doctor of law; and thus did you waste the precious hour of my youth in the dry, unprofitable and never-ending task of learning words.<sup>34</sup>

Bernier, who is mainly responsible for the above information, further asserts that some of the scholars, either to court favour with the Emperor through flattery by adding energy to his speech, or actuated by jealousy of the Mullāh, affirm that the reproof did not end there, but that when the Emperor had spoken for a while on different topics, he

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34. *Bernier's Travels*, (Constable), pp. 154-161.

resumed his speech as follows :

**Discourse  
continues.**

“ Were you not aware that it is during the period of infancy when the memory is commonly so retentive that the mind may receive a thousand wise precepts; and be easily furnished with such valuable instructions as will elevate it with lofty conceptions, and render the individual capable of glorious deeds? Can we repeat our prayers, or acquire a knowledge of law and of the sciences only through the medium of Arabic? May not our devotions be offered up as acceptably, and solid information communicated as easily, in our mother tongue? You gave my father, Shāh Jahān, to understand that you instructed me in philosophy; and, indeed, I have a perfect remembrance of your having during several years, harassed my brain with idle and foolish propositions, the solution of which yields no satisfaction to the mind—propositions which seldom enter into the business of life; wild and extravagant reveries conceived with great labour and forgotten as soon as conceived; whose only effect is to fatigue and ruin the intellect, and to render a man headstrong and insufferable. O yes, you caused me to devote the most valuable years of my life to your favourite hypotheses, or systems, and when I left you, I

could boast of no greater attainment in the sciences than the use of many obscure and uncouth terms, calculated to discourage, confound, and appal a youth of the most masculine understanding ; terms invented to cover the vanity and ignorance of pretenders to philosophy ; of men who, like yourself, would impose the belief that they transcend others of their species in wisdom, and that dark and ambiguous jargon conceals many profound mysteries known only to themselves. If you had taught me that philosophy which adapts the mind to reason, and will not suffer it to rest satisfied with anything short of the most solid arguments ; if you had inculcated lessons which elevate the soul and fortify it against the assaults of fortune, tending to produce the enviable equanimity which is neither insolently elated by prosperity, nor basely depressed by adversity, if you had made me acquainted with the nature of men ; accustomed me always to refer to first principles, and given me a sublime and adequate conception of the universe, and of the order and regular motion of its parts ; if such, I say, had been the nature of the philosophy imbibed under your tuition, I should be more indebted to you than Alexander to Aristotle, and should consider it my duty to bestow a very different reward on you than Aristotle received from



that Prince. Answer me, sycophant, ought you not to have instructed me on one point at least, so essential to be known by a king; namely, on the reciprocal duties between the sovereign and his subjects? Ought you not also to have foreseen that I might, at some future period, be compelled to contend with my brothers, sword in hand, for the crown, and for my very existence? Such, as you must well know, has been the fate of the children of almost every king of Hindustan. Did you ever instruct me in the art of war how to besiege a town, or draw up an army in battle array? Happy for me that I consulted wiser heads than thine on these subjects! Go. Withdraw to thy village. Henceforth let no person know either who thou art, or what is become of thee."<sup>35</sup>

Allowing for any exaggeration, addition or  
 Criticism of the alteration, made consciously  
 discourse. or unconsciously by Bernier,  
 this lengthy discourse on the subject of  
 education by a seventeenth century educationist  
 is interesting as well as illuminating. It does  
 not seem necessary to discuss whether part of  
 it came from Alamgir's advisers or not.  
 Taking it, therefore, as it stands, we can get  
 from it the view of Muslim education held by

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35. *Ibid.*

the then educationists of India. As an able administrator and a sagacious statesman, Alamgir felt the necessity of a more satisfactory education than had been imparted to him by his teachers. He did not object to the theological basis of his education; what he did object to was the 'pedantry' and 'formalism' with which it was characterized. He did not at all like the mere memorizing of words and terms without understanding their meaning and knowing their proper use, and was all averse to the wasting of time and energy involved in acquiring skill in grammar. Whereas Akbar the Great attached immense importance to the teaching of scientific subjects in his schools and colleges, Alamgir emphasized a 'broad humanism', wherein history, geography, languages of the neighbouring states, the art of war as well as of administration would occupy a prominent place. With Alamgir, education was a preparation for life; and the formation of lofty conceptions and development of such habits of thought and action as would enable the students to face all the dangers and difficulties of life with wisdom and valour are, therefore, set forth by him in his discourse as essentials of good education. What he desired, among other things, was to connect the education imparted with the vocation which the students

wanted to follow after completing their course of studies. All this is evidently quite modern and therefore of the highest interest and importance to the modern educationist who is anxious to introduce such educational reforms as are urgently needed in these days.<sup>36</sup>

The discourse reproduced above, besides drawing the sketch of what the education of a royal prince ought to include, manifests the kind and quality of education which Alamgir acquired from various sources. 'This theory of royal education', says Stanley Lane-Poole, 'thus expressed with some French *pariphrasis* would have done credit to Roger Ascham when he was training the vigorous intellect of the future Queen Elizabeth in her seclusion at Chestnut'.<sup>37</sup>

It might be interesting for the reader to have a glimpse of the training given by Alamgir to his children. He taught them in accordance with his own theory of royal education as outlined above. It was an eminently practical education that he gave them, Muhammad Sultān, Shāh 'Ālam and Muhammad Akbar were thoroughly accomplished in the essentials of

36 Keay's *Ancient Indian Education*, pp. 136-37.

37 *Aurangzeb*, by Stanley Lane-Poole, p. 79

imperial education.<sup>38</sup> Bernier's observations in this respect are interesting and informative. Says he :—

**Bernier's observations on Alamgir's anxiety for their education.** "The Ethiopian embassy was still in Delhi, when Aurangzebe assembled his privy-council, together with the learned men of his court, for the purpose of selecting a suitable preceptor for his third son, Sultan Ekbar,<sup>39</sup> whom he designs for his successor. He evinced upon this occasion the utmost solicitude that this young prince should receive such an education as might justify the hope of his becoming a great man. No person can be more alive than Aurangzebe to the necessity of storing the minds of Princes, destined to rule nations, with useful knowledge. As they surpass others in power and elevation, so ought they, he says, to be pre-eminent in wisdom and virtue."<sup>40</sup>

**Manucci on the education of Mughal Princes.** Niccolao Manucci informs us that according to a Mughal practice the princes were taught to read and write their mother-tongue when they reached the age of five. Thereafter they were put under the instruction

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38. See *Alamgir* in M. Zaka Ullah's *Tārīkh-i-Hindustān*, Vol. vii, pp. 504-506.

39. Muhammad Akbar was in fact his fourth son, but the third then alive.

40. *Vide Bernier's Travels*, Constable, p. 144.

of learned scholars and eunuchs, who were entrusted with the duty of giving them literary as well as military education. It was also part of their duty to regulate the amusements of the princes in such a way as to prevent their proclivities to indulgence in vicious habits, and thereby enable them to acquire a knowledge of the important affairs of the world.<sup>41</sup> Catrou draws mainly upon Manucci and supplies us with the following information with regard to the education of the Mughal Princes :—

“ Whilst the princes remain in the *harem*,  
 Catrou on their education. under the eye of their father,  
 a eunuch is charged with their  
 education. They are taught to read and  
 sometimes to write in Arabic and in Persian.  
 Their bodies are formed to military exercises,  
 and they are instructed in the principles of  
 equity. They are taught to decide rationally  
 upon subjects of dispute which occur or on  
 suppositious suits at law. Finally they are  
 instructed in the Muhammadan religion, and in  
 the interests of the nation, which they may be  
 called one day to govern.”<sup>42</sup>

Thus there can be no doubt that the Mughal Princes were taught in a most efficient

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41. *Storia do Mogor*, by N. Manucci, Vol. ii., pp. 346-47.

42. Catrou's *History of the Mughal Dynasty*, p. 288.



manner. One cannot help pronouncing their education as excellent; for it embraced almost everything important for an imperial prince. It was a thoroughly liberal and essentially practical education. It was owing to this education that they became conquerors, rulers, reformers, peace-makers and law-givers, who, in point of literary knowledge, military skill, administrative genius and 'broad humanism', rank with the greatest sovereigns of the world. A passage in the *Annals and Antiquities of Rājasthān* by Col. Tod embodies in it an epitome of their attainments, and I think his words may be quoted in support of what is stated above. Says he :—

“ Were we to contrast the literary acquirements of the Chughtai princes with those of their contemporaries of Europe, the balance of lore would be found on the side of the Asiatics, even though Elizabeth and Henry IV of France were in the scale. Among the princes from Jaxartes are historians, poets, astronomers, founders of systems of government and religion, warriors, and great captains, who claim our respect and admiration.”<sup>43</sup>

**Tod on their many-sided acquirements.**

43. *Annals and Antiquities of Rājasthān*, by Col. James Tod. Vol. i, pp. 298-99.

In the light of the evidence adduced above it can be safely asserted  
**Conclusion.** that the education of the imperial princes engaged the utmost attention of the ruling sovereigns who had an earnest desire to leave behind worthy successors, capable of controlling the affairs of a vast and wonderful empire, and therefore sought to impart to their sons the best education that was then available. Their efforts fructified, and as a result India was furnished with a series of emperor-educationists who were immensely interested in the educational well-being of their subjects. The education received by the latter as princes found a fit expression in the foundation of innumerable educational institutions when they became kings. Now then it should not be difficult to explain and to account for the multiplication of *maktabs* and *madrasahs*, the growth of libraries and literary societies, and the educational richness which characterized that period.

## CHAPTER XII

### GIRLS' EDUCATION

**"Acquisition of knowledge is incumbent upon all the Faithful, men as well as women."**<sup>1</sup>

*—Muhammad*

**Introductory.** The accepted standards of civilization differ at different times, in different climes, under different circumstances. By the pure and the pious of the Middle Ages it was regarded as unnecessary and even injurious to educate women; the puritan looked upon it as a crime. Few indeed in the past thought of teaching a young girl anything except domestic science, *i.e.* sewing, spinning and looking after the household affairs. If to-day the opinion is changed, it is because many things have changed. Notwithstanding this, the Musalmāns of Mediæval India, as also their brothers elsewhere, who drew their inspiration from the Holy Qur'ān and the noble Traditions of their Prophet, were sufficiently civilized to look after the intellectual welfare of the fair sex.

1. Saying 424 in *The Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad*, by M. Abdul Fadl.

An attempt to trace the history of womens' education to those times, though replete with interest, will, it must be acknowledged at the outset, be handicapped by the paucity of material on the subject consequent upon the observance of Purdah.<sup>2</sup> Whatever scanty material is available, it lies scattered over numerous Persian sources, some of which are still inaccessible. So, a discussion based on the scanty and scattered material is bound to be perfunctory, but the rays radiating from the accounts of contemporary chroniclers may be brought into focus in such a way as to present a credible picture of female education as it was imparted in those times. To elucidate the subject, as I take it up, it is necessary to deal with it piecemeal. For this purpose I have divided it into three sections,—the first, relating to direct evidence in the matter, refers to girls' schools extant in those times; the second and the third are indirect evidences: the second is about the prevalent customs and practices bearing upon the subject incidentally, the third gives some names of Muslim ladies well

2. It was no good manners for a Muslim to refer to womanfolk in the open, and whenever a contemporary Muslim chronicler broke through this convention, it was only incidentally and in connection with some other topic.

known in the annals of Islām for their learning and erudition,—a strong evidence in itself.

## I

Some of the more enlightened and cultured Kings of Muslim India, **Girls' Schools.** whether in the Paramount Empire of Delhi or in its dependencies, were remarkable pioneers of female education. They founded and maintained schools for girls in their kingdoms and took care to promote their interests. The Sultān of Hinawr, who was an Arab descendant, seems to have been particularly keen about the education of his female subjects. Ibn Batutah, the famous globe-trotter who visited his kingdom during his world tour, informs us that there were as many as thirteen girls' schools in his capital, and that the women of that place were pretty, chaste and knew the Holy Qur'ān by heart.<sup>3</sup> Sultān Ghiyās-ud-Din Khilji of Mālwa was also very anxious about the education of young girls. Among the fifteen thousand women of his *seraglio*, we are given to know for certain, were school-mistresses, musicians, women to read prayers, and persons of all professions and trades'.<sup>4</sup> The presence of

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3. *Vide* Gibb's Translation of *Ibn Batutah's Travels*. pp. 330 and 331; and Defremery's *Voyages d' Ibn Batutah*. Vol. IV, p. 67.

4. Brigg's Translation of '*Tārīkh-i-Ferishta*', p. 236.



school-mistresses in the Imperial Harem testifies to the fact that the ladies in the palace were taught by them. There is also evidence on record to show that in the reign of Akbar the Great regular education was given to the ladies of the Imperial Harem, who were not less than five thousand in number. The Emperor is reputed to have established a girls' school in his palace at Fathpur Sikri.<sup>5</sup> It serves as a cogent proof of Akbar's solicitude for the education of women.

## II

I may next take up customs and practices as described by Jāfar Sharif in his *Qānūn-i-Islām*.<sup>6</sup> In this interesting book of his, the learned author has given an excellent account of the system of female education then prevalent in Muslim India. He informs us that regular girls' schools existed in those times and further adds that there was a common practice of writing an *Idi*,—generally a verse relating to the most celebrated Muslim festival called *Id*,—or a blessing for the girl on a

Customs and  
Practices in the  
North.

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5. Smith in his '*Fathpur Sikri*' and Havel in his '*Hand Book to Agra and the Taj*,' have given a plan of this school each. Mr. N. N. Law has reproduced it in his *Promotion of Learning in India* from Smith's *Fathpur Sikri*.

6. *Vide Qānūn-i Islām*, by Jāfar Sharif, pp. 47, ff.

coloured paper, known as *Zarfishāni*, when she commenced her studies in a *maktab*. At this time she was made to read the *Zarfishāni* to her parents, who made rich presents to the honoured *ustād* in an assemblage called for the purpose. This was known as the *Maktab Ceremony*.<sup>7</sup> The same authority is responsible for the information that whenever a girl began a new lesson of a new book, it was customary to entertain her tutor and to offer him money presents sent by her parents. He also refers to presents given to the teacher by the parents of the girl on finishing the Holy Qur'ān—an important education in itself. On such occasions, he concludes, half holiday was granted to the whole *maktab*.<sup>8</sup>

These customs and practices were by no means confined to the Sultan-  
**In the South.**                      ate of Delhi or the Mughal  
 Empire, but were in evidence far more in the provincial kingdoms, independent of the Paramount Power enthroned at the centre, or subject to it. We also know that many a Muslim widow considered it her sacred duty to impart religious education to girls and to teach them

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7. The same ceremony was performed in the case of boys as well. It appears to me that boys and girls of young age were often taught together in the same schools, though there were separate schools for girls also.

8. See *Qānūn-i-Islām*, by Jāfar Sharif, pp. 47 ff.

to read the Holy Qur'an. There were numerous schools kept in private houses for the instruction of girls. They have survived to our own times and are commonly found in the India of to-day.<sup>9</sup>

### III

Next in the treatment of the subject is an account of some learned ladies of the times. An early instance of an educated princess is to be found in Māh Malik, also called Jalāl-ud-Dunya-ud-Din, the grand-daughter of Alā-ud-Din Jahānsoz. Minhāj-i-Sirāj, the well-known historian of the reign of Sultān Nasir-ud-Din of the Slave Dynasty and author of the *Tabqāt-i-Nāsiri*, speaks highly of her erudition and says that her handwriting was like 'royal pearls'.<sup>10</sup>

Chānd Sultāna, the most favourite heroine of the Deccan and a woman of extraordinary talents, also appears to have had an excellent education. In her person were combined great natural gifts with a rare variety of accomplishments. Skilled as she was in the arts of war, she was equally accomplished in

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9. *History of Indigenous Education in the Punjab*, by Dr. Leitner, pp 97 and 98.

10. Raverty's Translation of Minhāj-i-Siraj's *Tabqāt-i-Nāsiri*, p. 392.

the arts of peace. Almost all the people of her country believed that no minstrel could play half so beautifully on the lyre or sing half so sweetly as she did. With fluency she spoke Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Kanarese and Marathi. Painting flowers was one of her favourite hobbies.<sup>11</sup>

**Gulbadan Banu Begum.** Gulbadan Bānu Begum, the talented daughter of Emperor Bābar, is the first literary gem of the Mughal Period that we come across in this survey. It is recorded in the *Humāyun-Nāmāh*, a literary product of her own productive pen, that she possessed a vast collection of important books in a library of her own.<sup>12</sup>

**Salima Sultana.** Salima Sultāna, the niece of Emperor Humāyun, was a well-read and thoroughly accomplished princess. She was well-versed in Persian literature and was also a good poetess. She composed elegant verses under the *nom-de-plume* of *Makhfi* or 'Concealed'. Her *Diwān* (collection of poems) is still famous among those interested in Persian.<sup>13</sup>

11. Vide Mr Beveridge's Foreword to Mr. N. N. Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*.

12. Beveridge's Translation of Gulbadan Bānu Begum's *Humāyun-Nāmāh*, p. 76

13. Blochmann's Translation of *Āin-i-Akbari*, p. 309 : and Col. Malleon's *Akbar*, p. 185.

**Maham Ankah.** Maham Ankāh, the wet-nurse of Emperor Akbar, was a highly learned lady of her time. She was not only a great lover of learning, but a remarkable promoter of education as well. She was one of those who believed that the greatest service to the people is to educate them. To achieve this object, she spent a large part of her fortune and laid the foundation of a college which has already been described elsewhere.<sup>14</sup>

**Nur Jahan.** Nur Jahān, the celebrated wife of Emperor Jahāngir, was a woman of unique talents. To her physical beauty were wedded her mental endowments; but far more than this, she was a highly cultured lady, thoroughly versed in Arabic and Persian literature. One of her charms, with which she captivated Jahāngir, was her facility in composing extempore verses.<sup>15</sup> That she carried on the administration of the country most efficiently even during the lifetime of her husband, reveals her deep learning and vast knowledge which had made her wise and intelligent enough to

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14. *Ancient Indian Education*, by Rev. Dr. Keay, p. 138.

15. Elphinstone's *History of India*, p. 485; Justice Amir Ali's article in the '*Nineteenth Century*,' (1899), Allahabad, p. 756; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 202.



comprehend and control the intricate problems of the Mughal Government.<sup>16</sup>

**Mumtaz Mahal.** Mumtāz Mahal, also known as Arjamand Bānu Begum, the Lady of the Tāj and the most beloved wife of Emperor Shāh Jahān, has been handed down to posterity by the story of her powerful beauty and commanding abilities as evinced in her literary tastes. She was an adept in Persian and could compose poems in that language.<sup>17</sup>

**Jahan Ara Begum.** One of the noblest examples of female scholars of repute to be found in the history of Islām in India is recorded of Jahān Ara Begum, celebrated in song, biography and history as the heroic, the witty, the generous, the beautiful, and above all, the learned daughter of Shāh Jahān. It was on account of her sound education that she was elevated to the rank of the First Lady of the Realm. Be it said to her credit that she fully justified the confidence reposed in her. Her knowledge enabled her to control the Imperial Harem in every detail, to regulate the social ceremonies of the

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16. See my *Mughal Empire*, Ch. VII ; Keay's *Ancient Indian Education*, p. 138 ; *History of Jahangir*, by Beni Prasad, pp. 182 and 183 ; and *A Short History of Muslim Rule in India*, by Ishwari Prasad, p. 496.

17. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 202.

Court, and to preside over the Womens' Society of the Capital. She had a genius for poetry too; she composed her verses in Persian. She wrote her own epitaph which is characterized by profound humility and simplicity. It reads:—'Let not any person cover my tomb with anything other than earth and grass, for they are best fitted for the graves of the poor'.<sup>18</sup>

**Zebinda Begum.** Zebinda Begum, the fourth daughter of Shāh Jahān, was also an educated maiden. She was a gifted poetess, who composed a volume of mystical verses which are still read and admired by the learned of the Punjāb and Hindustān. One of the most interesting relics in Lāhore is the gateway, called *Chau-burji*—once the entrance to the garden of this learned princess, who, in this retreat on the bank of the Rāvi, composed her mystical poems.<sup>19</sup>

**Sati-un-Nisa.** Another remarkable woman belonging to the same time is Sati-un-Nisa, a very learned lady, who, on account of her sound education and profound literary knowledge, was made the tutoress of Jahān Ara Begum. She was well-versed

18. *Hearn's Seven Cities of Delhi*, p. 116.

19. *Land of the Five Rivers and Sind*, by David Ross, p. 125.

in Muslim Scriptures, was a poetess of no mean merit, was equally at home in Persian literature.<sup>20</sup>

The daughters of Emperor Aurangzeb  
**Daughters of Aurangzeb:**      Alamgir were one and all  
**Zeb-un-Nisa.**              learned ladies. They were taught in accordance with their father's own theory of education. Of them all, the most cultured and erudite was Zeb-un-Nisa. This remarkable princess has left us a *Diwan* called "*Diwān-i-Mākhfi*" (literally 'Concealed') and an interesting book, called *Zeb-ul-Manshāt* after her own name. So supreme was her love for learning that a number of learned scholars used to wait upon her for assistance, which was never grudged to them. No wonder that numerous compilations and original works were dedicated to her. It was at her instance that a most extensive commentary on the Holy Qur'ān, as written by Imām Fakhr-ud-Din Rāzi, was, for the first time, translated from Arabic into Persian by Mullāh Sāfi-ud-Din Ardbeli and renamed *Zeb-ut-Tafsir* after her name. The *Ma'āsir-i-Alamgiri* records that she had a vast library, containing voluminous works treating of diverse subjects.<sup>21</sup>

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20. *Anecdotes of Aurangzeb and Historical Essays*, by Jadunāth Sarkar, pp. 151 and 173; and *Promotion of Learning in India* by N. N. Law, p. 204.

21. *Ma'āsir-i-Alamgiri* (Bib. Ind.), pp. 538 ff.

These and many more learned ladies, whose names do not find place for want of space, will live long in the hagiology of this country. The view of a modern writer that "the Muslim aristocracy and royalty did not neglect to give their daughters an excellent education and training" is amply substantiated by the evidence adduced above, and we should unhesitatingly join hands with Mr. N. N. Law when he says that 'these examples must have been followed by the nobility and the higher classes of Muhammadans',<sup>22</sup> thus raising the percentage of educated ladies in India to a higher level.

**Conclusion.** I must now close my inquiry into the subject after presenting as much information as I could lay my hands upon to show that the education of the gentler sex was sufficiently provided for in the Islamic times. Though their attainments, generally speaking, could not have been very high, yet considering the conditions of the country and the circumstances of the times, the results are fairly creditable, and one can confidently say that the ladies of those days were no 'mere moths of peace'.

22. Law's *Promotion of Learning in India*, p. 205. Also see *J. A. S. B.*, Vol. I, 1935, No. 2, p. 243.

## CHAPTER XIII

# TECHNICAL EDUCATION

**"At a time when the west of Europe, the birth-place of modern industrial system, was inhabited by uncivilized tribes, India was famous for the wealth of her rulers and for the high artistic skill of her craftsmen. And even at a much later period, when the merchant adventurers from the west made their first appearance in India, the industrial development of the country was, at any rate, not inferior to that of the more advanced European nations."**<sup>1</sup>

—*Industrial Commission.*

**Introductory**      The view expressed by the Industrial Commission in the extract quoted above is shared, supported, supplemented and substantiated by many an eminent authority on the subject, *e.g.*, "The skill of the Indians in the production of delicate woven fabrics, in the mixing of colours, the working of metals and precious stones and in all manner of technical arts has from very early times enjoyed a world-wide celebrity."<sup>2</sup>—*Professor Weber*. "Industry not only supplied all local wants but also enabled India to export its finished products to foreign countries."<sup>3</sup>—*Ranade*. "It was this trade and prosperity that attracted the European traders to India. Their rivalry to secure a footing in

1. *Vide Report of Industrial Commission* (1918), p. 1.
2. *Ibid, Minute of Dissent*, p. 295.
3. *Essays on Indian Economics*, by Ranade, p. 171.



India at that time was occasioned not by the raw materials of the country but by the value and variety of her manufactures and crafts."<sup>4</sup>—*Professors Jathar and Beri.*

**Artistic and industrial development indicating the existence of a good system of technical education.**

The rich efflorescence of fine arts and crafts and the conspicuous progress achieved in the equipment of the people of all classes, testify a good deal to the successful cultivation of artistic, vocational and technical knowledge. There were numerous manufactories, and articles, such as fine fabrics of cotton, silk handkerchiefs, embroidered caps, painted ware, cups, basins, steel guns, knives, scissors, white paper, and gold and silver ornaments, were made at different centres to meet internal as well as external demand. The beautiful shawls of Kashmir, the costly carpets of Agra and Lahore, and the matchless muslin of Dacca, bulked largely in India's international trade. They adorned the pompous courts of the greatest Cæsars of the world and were rare luxuries in those days. The fact that arts and crafts flourished prodigiously in Muslim India and provided a vast scope for the native talent, unmistakably testifies to the existence of a regular system of technical education, and

4. *Indian Economics*, by Jathar and Beri, Vol. i, p. 131.

s at once a tribute to the efficiency of the artisans of India.<sup>5</sup>

There were innumerable *kārkhanās*, or manufacturing centres, which provided technical training to those who evinced special interest in and aptitude for handicraft. The Public Works Department, or the *Shāh-rat-i-Ām*, as it was technically called, was maintained by the State. It looked after the workshops in which industrial education was imparted by the system of apprenticeship,<sup>6</sup> which is still widely in vogue in India. Boys were often apprenticed with the artisans to the trade. In this way the latter secured the services of the former who, in return, received the tips about the trade from their masters, and in course of time became perfect artisans. No regular fee was charged, but a small present was frequently made to the proprietor or foreman of the shop, and in some trades a religious ceremony was also performed at the time of commencing apprenticeship. The

**Karkhanas or workshops as technological institutes.**

5. *Vide India at the Death of Akbar*, by Moreland, pp. 171 ff.; *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, by Moreland, pp. 52 ff.; *Bernier's Travels in the Moghul Empire* (Constable), pp. 228, 254, 256, 402-404 and 440; *Indian Economics*, by Jathar and Beri, Vol. I, pp. 130 ff.; and *J. A. S. B.* Vol. I, 1935, No. 2, pp. 205 ff.

6. *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 117.

boys began their work at an early age. At first they were expected to undertake the ordinary duties of the shop, such as the cleaning of tools, etc. Later they began to perform the simplest operations of the trade. Though there was evidently little definite instruction, they gradually acquired skill by handling the tools and watching the workmen at their task. As soon as they made a little progress, they were given small wages which went on increasing as they became more and more efficient and useful. Finally, when their training was finished, they either went out into the world and worked independently, or secured a permanent place on the roll of their masters' shops. To the poor artisans this system had an advantage in this that their sons began to earn their livelihood at an early age and ceased to be a burden on their parents.<sup>7</sup>

These *kārkhānas* were famous for the excellence of their output. **Their importance.** They supplied the requirements of the most luxurious courts and absorbed the greatest number of the population, next only to agriculture. Their value as technological institutes cannot be overestimated. They were the principal centres

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7. See *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. iv, p. 436.

of technical instruction or vocational training. They trained and turned out numerous artisans and craftsmen, whose immortal achievements were admired even by those who were most accustomed to the pomp of Paris. They owed their origin as well as existence to court patronage, with the withdrawal of which, however, they began to die or decay, so much so that it is extremely difficult now to appreciate their importance as technical schools or to bring out their permanent place in the economic life of the community.<sup>8</sup>

Technical instruction also found a suitable medium in the Domestic System of Industrial Education, which has already been described.

As noted before, big institutions like schools and colleges did not always make provision for instruction in arts and crafts, and hence it was that those who wished to learn them, would go to the houses of their chosen *ustads* (teachers), who were skilled artisans and craftsmen. But skill in arts and crafts was mostly hereditary. The father was the teacher of his sons and the mother of her daughters. It was thus that training in particular arts and crafts was popularly imparted.<sup>9</sup>

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8. *Indian Economics*, by Jather and Beri, Vol. i, p. 132.

9. See Keay's *Ancient Indian Education*, pp. 77-78; *Indian Economics*, by Jathar and Beri, Vol. I, p. 132; and

The system had its merits as well as demerits. The greatest of its merits was that it preserved the art in a particular class and ensured its efficiency. Each father brought up his sons to the same trade which he himself plied, and it was in this way that the dexterity and skill of each particular craft were handed down from one generation to another. The standard of work was kept up because the father would train his sons as best as he could in his own workshop. Not only did there exist a most cordial relation between the master father and the apprentice sons, but the training was free from all the artificiality of a school-room. The boys learnt the art by observing the movements of their father at work, imitating him and handling the tools in the same way as he did. The father on his part would, from the very nature of the case, take a real delight in the progress of his sons, and proudly pass on to them the skill he himself possessed. The worst of its defects, as an off-spring of the caste system, was that the boys had practically no choice in chalking out their future programmes in everyday life.

If arts and industries thrived abundantly in Muslim India—and there is ample evidence to show that they did—it was due mainly to

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*Bernier's Travels in the Moghul Empire*, (Constable) p. 259.



the imperial patronage. The remarks of a foreign traveller, who visited India during the seventeenth century, are quite in consistence with the view presented above :—

“ The arts in the Indies would long ago have lost their beauty and delicacy, if the Monarch and principal *Omrahs* did not keep in their pay a number of artists who work in their houses, teach the children, and are stimulated to exertion by the hope of reward and the fear of the *korrah*. The protection afforded by powerful patrons to rich merchants and tradesmen who pay the workmen rather higher wages, tends also to preserve the arts .... ”<sup>10</sup>

Those who invented new things as well as those who made important mechanical works were encouraged by liberal bonuses and munificent allowances. Some of the early Muslim Kings and almost all the Great Mughal Emperors stand out most pre-eminently as promoters of technical knowledge. To the first category fall the names of Alā-ud-Din Khilji, Firoz Shāh Tughluq, Sikandar Shāh Lodhi and Sher Shāh Sūri, all of whom endeavoured to develop the

10. *Bernier's Travels*, (Constable), p. 228.

economic resources of the country under their control by a widespread diffusion of vocational knowledge. Firoz Shāh maintained a regular department of industries under his personal supervision, and took a keen interest in the technical training of his slaves, whom he placed under the tuition of master-craftsmen in their workshops for learning different arts. There were, in all, one hundred and eighty thousand slaves at his disposal, and it is recorded to his credit that he took good care to provide for their education in various arts and crafts. We are informed by Zia-ud-Din Barni, a contemporary chronicler who is neither an apologist nor a court minion, that at one time as many as twelve thousand slaves were turned into skilled artisans and traders under his benevolent care.<sup>11</sup>

While dwelling upon the abundance of work-people in India Bābar says :—

“ Another convenience of Hindustān is that the workmen of every profession and trade are innumerable and without end. For any work, or any employment, there is always a set ready, to whom the same

**Babar's account  
of Indian workmen  
and their abundance.**

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11. *Vide Tārīkh-i-Hindustān*, by M. Zaka Ullāh Khan, Vol. II, p. 208 ; *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. III, pp. 340-41; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, pp. 55 and 117.

employment and trade have descended from father to son for ages..... In Agra alone, and of stone-cutters belonging to that place only, I every day employed on my palaces six hundred and eighty persons; and in Agra, Sikri, Biāna, Dholpur, Gwalior, and Koel (Aligarh), there were every day employed on my works one thousand four hundred and ninety-nine stone-cutters. In the same way men of every trade and occupation are numberless and without stint in Hindustān."<sup>12</sup>

Here then it must be pointed out that there could not have been such an abundance of workmen of all professions and trades in India without there being some system of technical education.

Among those who fall to the second category stand out the names of Emperor Akbar and his son, Jahāngir, as the most conspicuous. The former, besides being an inventor himself, was a remarkable patron of arts and an eminent promoter of technical education. He organized the Public Works Department anew and himself inspected the workshops occasionally. Under his fostering care, countless curious contrivances and many mechanical works were produced. The

**Progress of arts and industries during the Mughal Period.**

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12. Erskine's *Memoirs of Babar*, Vol. II, pp. 243-44.

ingenious works, which he is said to have rewarded, 'were such as would have done credit to the artisan of the twentieth century.'<sup>13</sup> With his encouragement private schools under individual instructors multiplied, and these provided for the teaching of arts and crafts not included in the curricula of schools and colleges. Dr. V. A. Smith, on the authority of Mr. Fitch, says that during the reign of Akbar carpets and other fine textiles were manufactured at Agra and Fathpur Sikri, good cotton cloth at Patan in Gujarāt and at Burhānpur in Khāndesh, and that Sunargaon was famous for its fine fabrics, 'the best and finest cloth made of cotton in all India'<sup>14</sup> Under Jahāngir and Shāh·Jahān arts and crafts, industries and commerce thrived as never before during the Muslim Period of Indian history. This is borne out by the cumulative testimony of native historians as well as of foreign travellers, who visited India during that period. Sir Thomas Roe, the English ambassador at the Mughal Court during the reign of Jahāngir, informs

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13. Shaikh Nur-ul-Haq has given a highly interesting account of the marvellous mechanical contrivances produced during the reign of Akbar the Great in his *Zubdat-ut-Twārikh*, for which *vide History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. VI, p. 192.

14. *Akbar the Great Mughal*, by Smith, p. 410 ; and Dr. Cousin's article in the *Eastern Times*, dated 7th June 1935.

us that manual arts were in a flourishing state and that they were not confined to those peculiar to the country. One of his presents to the Emperor was a couch. Within a very short time several other couches were constructed, and they were very superior in materials and fully equal in workmanship. Roe also offered a picture as a present to His Imperial Majesty, and not long afterwards he was presented with a number of its copies which were so faithful that he could not make out the original from amongst the copies.<sup>15</sup> Bernier, who visited India during the reigns of Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb, was equally impressed by the affluence of fine arts and the height of workmanship displayed in them. He says :—

“ There are ingenious men in every part of the Indies. Numerous are the instances of handsome pieces of workmanship made by persons destitute of tools, and who can scarcely be said to have received instruction from a master. Sometimes they imitate so perfectly articles of European manufacture that the difference between the original and copy can hardly be discerned. Among other things, the Indians make excellent muskets, and fowling-pieces,

**Bernier's testimony to Indian workmanship.**

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15. Elphinstone's *History of India*, p. 489.



and such beautiful gold ornaments that it may be doubted if the exquisite workmanship of those articles can be exceeded by any European goldsmith. I have often admired the beauty, softness, and delicacy of their paintings and miniatures, and was particularly struck with the exploits of Ekbar, painted on a shield by a celebrated artist, who is said to have been seven years in completing the picture. I thought it a wonderful performance."<sup>16</sup>

Speaking about the achievements of the Kashmiris in arts and crafts, he says :—

“The workmanship and beauty of their palkeys, bedsteads, trunks, inkstands, boxes, spoons, and various other things are quite remarkable, and articles of their manufacture are in use in every part of the Indies. They perfectly understand the art of varnishing, and are eminently skilful in closely imitating the beautiful veins of a certain wood, by inlaying with gold threads so delicately wrought that I never saw anything more elegant or perfect. But what may be considered peculiar to Kachemire, and the staple commodity, that which particularly promotes the trade of the

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16. *Bernier's Travels in the Moghul Empire* (Constable pp. 254-55)

country and fills it with wealth, is the prodigious quantity of shawls which they manufacture, and which gives occupation even to the little children.....".<sup>17</sup>

His account does not end here. He goes on to describe the manufacture of shawls in Patna, Agra and Lāhore, of chintzes in Masulipatam, of silk and cotton cloth in Bengāl and gives a somewhat graphic picture of the *kārkhānās*, or workshops, where the various arts and crafts were learnt and plied:—

“Large halls are seen in many places, called *Karkanays* (*Kārkhānās*) or workshops for the artisans. In one hall embroiderers are busily employed, superintended by a master. In another you see the goldsmiths; in a third, painters; in a fourth, varnishers in lacquer-work; in a fifth, joiners, turners, tailors, and shoemakers; in a sixth, manufacturers of silk, brocade, and those fine muslins of which are made turbans, girdles with golden flowers, and drawers, worn by females, so delicately fine as frequently to wear out in one night. This article of dress, which lasts only a few hours,

Description of  
karkhanas or  
workshops.

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17. *Ibid*, pp. 402—04. The *Āin-i-Akbari* also contains a valuable information on the subject of shawl manufacture, from which the following is an extract:—

“His Majesty (Akbar) encourages in every possible way the manufacture of shawls in Kashmir. In Lahore also there are more than a thousand workshops.”

may cost ten or twelve crowns, and even more, when beautifully embroidered with needlework.”<sup>18</sup>

In short the whole of the Mughal Period was characterised by a high tide of artistic development, rarely equalled, but never surpassed in the whole history of this country.<sup>19</sup> Could this be possible without technical training or industrial education? Is it not a testimony to the existence of a widespread system of such education?

Apart from the encouragement of the ruling princes, which was no doubt the mainstay of all arts and industries, technical training received a considerable impetus by a number of private bodies. There were many trade-guilds which provided education for particular professions and trades. Sometimes the trading classes maintained their own schools for the training of their children according to their own aims and objects.<sup>20</sup>

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18. *Bernier's Travels in Moghul Empire*, (Constable), pp. 258 and 259.

19. *India at the Death of Akbar*, by Moreland, pp. 171 ff.; *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, by Moreland pp. 52 ff.; *The Splendour that was 'Ind'*, by K. T. Shah, p. 30; 130 ff.; 159 ff.; 185 ff.; *Indian Economics*, by Jathar and Beri, Vol. I, pp. 130 ff.; and *Indian Year Book*, edited by S. Keed, pp. 19 ff.

20. *Indian Administration*, by V. G. Kale, p. 432.

To-day the machine has metamorpho-  
 sized the entire outlook of  
 Indian economic life and  
 modified its structure. Many an important  
 centre of arts and crafts has now been wiped  
 out, so much so that it is extremely difficult to  
 appreciate the importance of home manufac-  
 tures in those times. Knitting, spinning and  
 weaving were learnt and plied in houses, both  
 by men, women and children. *Charkha*, or  
 the spinning-wheel, has ceased to play the rôle  
 it has once played. Hardly was there a  
 house which was without it, and almost every  
 house was, so to say, a factory on a small  
 scale, where something or the other was  
 manufactured.<sup>21</sup>

The *Titans*, who dug wells, made  
 bridges, constructed canals,  
 erected edifices, laid out gar-  
 dens, planted roads, and, in short, achieved  
 their laurels in engineering before the  
 era of inventions had dawned, were not  
 imported from outside. History tells us that  
 they were taken to different countries and  
 employed in the construction of important

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21. *Indian Economic Life*, by Brij Narain; *Economic History of India*, by R. C. Dutt; K. M. Ashraf's article on the "Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan" in *J. A. S. B. Letters*, Vol. I, 1935, No. 2, pp. 196 ff.; and *Bernier's Travels*, p. 228.

edifices. Speaking about the magnificent monuments of Samarqand and the erection of the *Sangin* (stone) Mosque near the Iron-Gate, Bābar says that 'a number of stone-cutters were brought from Hindustān to work on it.'<sup>22</sup>

The quality of education which the Indian workmen received must, therefore, be pronounced as of a very high order, unless we are to make the presumption that they were all born geniuses. The degree of proficiency attained by them in art can only be conjectured by the works which they have left behind. And the skill and refinement with which they designed and constructed the most marvellous monuments of the Age; the dexterity as well as the delicacy displayed in the manufacture of woollen, silken and cotton fabrics; the height of workmanship shown in the technical treatment of wood, metal and stone; the astounding technique of dress and ornaments; and the constructive exactness manifested in preparing the products of peace as well as the weapons of war,—give one a fair idea of the kind and quality of technical training and vocational knowledge imparted in those days.

**Conclusion.**

22. Erskine's *Memoirs of Babar*, Vol. II, pp. 78 and 79.



## CHAPTER XIV

# EVOLUTION OF URDU

**'I have always looked upon Urdu both as a language and as a medium of culture,—as a common heritage of both the communities (Hindus and Muslims).'**

—*Rt. Hon. Sir T. B. Sapru.*

**Urdu is 'a language of polite intercourse. It is a heritage to whose present-day vitality and richness both Hindus and Muslims have contributed.'**

—*Hon. Sir G. S. Bajpai.*

During the period under review the action and reaction of some forces on one another resulted in the rise of a common language, Urdu, to trace the history of whose development forms the subject-matter of the present chapter. Both as an achievement of the then-existing system of education and on account of the rôle it has played (and will play?) as a medium of expression as well as instruction, it merits a specific mention in this book on education.<sup>1</sup>

The origins of Urdu<sup>2</sup> as a literary language are shrouded in a thick mist.

**Origin of Urdu** There is no direct evidence as to

1. For an exhaustive account of the subject, *vide Urdu Literature*, by R. B. Saksena, *Āb-i-Hayāt* (Urdu), by M. Muhammad Hussain Āzād; S. Khuda Bakhsh's article on 'Urdu Literature' in *M. U. J.* (July, 1931) pp. 11 ff.; and 'Hindustani' in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

2. Urdu (lit. camp or military bazar), the name of the new language, is derived from *Urdu-i-Mu'alla* or Royal Military Bazar, outside the Delhi Palace, where it took its

the exact date when it first sprang into life. In fact, of course, there cannot be such date, for the formation of a language takes a long course. It is equally difficult to say when the first foundation-stone was laid. Tradition assigns this to the time of Taimūr's invasion (1398 A. C.). There are some who fix a remoter date and say that Mas'ood bin Sa'ad wrote *Rekhta*<sup>3</sup> in Urdu in the eleventh century. Others maintain that Amir Khusrau, who flourished in the thirteenth century, composed some of his poems in Urdu, not a few of which have come down to us to testify to his having used it as his medium in poetry.<sup>4</sup> Scholarly opinion subscribes to the last view. In order to avoid controversy, I may roughly say that the soil was prepared and the seeds were sown during the early Muslim period and that the harvest was

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birth in the reign of Emperor Shāh Jahān. (*Vide Āb-i-Hayāt* pp. 20-21; and *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. i, p. 365).

3 Formerly when Urdu was employed for poetry, it was known as '*Rekhta*' or scattered and crumbled from the manner in which Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Hindi and Sanskrit words are scattered through it; but afterwards it was used for both poetry and prose alike. (*Vide Āb-i-Hayāt*, p. 21; and *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. i, p. 365.)

4. While Amir Khusrau, who lived in the thirteenth century of the Christian era, composed some of his poems in *Rekhta*, Chānd and Kabir, who flourished in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, freely employed Persian words in their works which are admittedly in Hindi. (*Vide 'Hindustāni'* in *Encyclopædia Britannica*; *Āb-i-Hayāt*, pp. 17 ff.; and S. Khuda Bakhsh's article in *M. U. J.*, p. 11.)

reaped during the Mughal Rule and the British Rāj.

As to what gave rise to the new language, it is not difficult to say. **Forces which produced it.** Forces such as the System of Instruction,—Hindus and Muslims studying together in the same schools without any restrictions of race, rank or religion; compulsory education in Persian; translation of Sanskrit and Hindi books into Persian; mutual exchange, adoption and incorporation of words, thoughts and ideas; Hindu-Muslim social intercourse,—combined and collectively created Urdu, which, in course of time, superseded its parents—Persian and Hindi—and became the *lingua franca* of Northern India.<sup>5</sup>

Urdu drank its inspiration from the fountain of Persian, the Latin of the East, and of Hindi, the language of the land. **Its convention of diction and grammatical structure.** Being poetical, it followed the rules of Persian prosody. It borrowed its forms and conventions of diction,—*Qasida* or laudatory ode, *Ghazal* or love-song, *Masnavi* or narrative poem, *Marsiya* or dirge, *Rubāi* or quatrain, *Hajv* or satire,—from Persian. Though its

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5. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. ii, p. 429; and Khuda Bakhsh's article in *M.U.J.* p. 11.

forms and conventions of diction are Persian, the diction itself, or vocabulary, is mostly Hindi. Its grammatical structure is almost entirely Hindi. Most of its verbs are Indian and a large number of nouns are of Indian origin. Its alphabet consists not only of Arabic and Persian letters, but also teems with scores of sounds foreign to Arabic and Persian but peculiar to Hindi. It can thus give correct expression to all the various sounds and accents of Arabic, Persian and Hindi, none of which can approach Urdu, at least in this respect. There are many Arabic words for which Hindi has no equivalents. Urdu, on the other hand, has, and is, like other progressive languages of the world, capable of admitting and absorbing words and terms from all other languages. In it were incorporated a large number of Arabic, Persian and even Turkish words. 'Such words, however, in no wise altered or influenced the language itself, which, as regards its inflexional and phonetic elements, remains still a pure Aryan dialect, just as pure in the pages of Wali or Sauda as it is in those of Tulsi Dās or Bihārī Lāl.' It must as well be pointed out here that 'the Musalmans had long been accustomed to speak pure Hindi and it was not they who introduced Persian words into the language, but the Hindus themselves,' who

had begun to learn Persian and become proficient in it.<sup>6</sup> Though it is long since it ceased to assimilate Arabic and Persian words and phrases, the process of assimilation has, nevertheless, continued. Urdu is now adding to its stock of words by incorporating new words and names from other languages. At present English and other European languages are enriching its vocabulary. It is adopted as a medium of instruction in two leading Muslim universities of India, *viz.*, Jāmia Osmānia and Jāmia Millia, where the various arts and sciences are taught through the medium of Urdu; and it is gratifying to note that there is a growing recognition of its value and work and an increasing importance attached to it even in provinces where provincial vernaculars are the *media* of expression. The mistaken view that Urdu is a foreign language—a view which is certainly the outcome of an utter ignorance of the origin and evolution of the language—is fast losing ground, though recently an extensive and yet unsuccessful propaganda has been launched against it. The following passage embodies in it the opinion of a fair-minded Hindu

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6. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. ii, p. 429; *M.U.J.*, p. 12; Sir Abdul Qadir's article in *J. R. S. A.*, 10th January, 1936; '*Hindustani*' in *Encyclopædia Britannica*; and Beames' *Comparative Grammar of the Modern Aryan Languages*, Vol. i, pp. 30-32.



scholar about the origin of Urdu and its place in the culture of our country :—

“Almost every work in Indo-Persian literature contains a large number of words of Indian origin, and thousands of Persian words became naturalized in every Indian vernacular language. The mingling of Persian, Arabic and Turkish words and ideas with languages and concepts of Sanskritic origin is extremely interesting from the philological point of view, and this co-ordination of unknowns resulted in the origin of the beautiful Urdu language. That language in itself symbolized the reconciliation of the hitherto irreconcilable and mutually hostile types of civilization represented by Hinduism and Islam.”<sup>7</sup>

The *Encyclopædia Britannica* also contains some information on the subject and from it the following is an extract apropos of this topic :—

“Peculiarities of composition, such as reversing the positions of the governing and the governed word (*e.g.*, *bāp merā* for *merā bāp*), or the adjective and the substantative it qualifies, or such as the use of Persian phrases with the preposition *bā* instead of the Hindi postposition of the ablative case (*e.g.*, *bā*

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7. See Sir Abdul Qadir's article in *J. R. S. A.*, 10th January, 1936.

*khushi* instead of *khushi se*, or *bā hukm sarkār ke* instead of *sarkār ke hukm se*) are no doubt to be met with in many writings, and these, perhaps, combined with the too free indulgence on the part of some authors in the use of high-flown and pedantic Persian and Arabic words in place of common and yet chaste Hindi words, and the general use of Persian instead of Nāgri character have induced some to regard Hindustāni or Urdu a language distinct from Hindi. But such a view betrays a radical misunderstanding of the whole question.”<sup>8</sup>

Is it not then the height of absurdity to  
 Difference of Script. call Urdu a foreign language?  
 Granted that the script employed in writing Urdu is not Indian, but if everything that is not Indian is to be discarded, then not only the Urdu script but numerous other things of outside extraction, which have gone far in the making of India, and with them the Hindi script too, will have to be discarded. If the outside invention of script is a disqualification in the case of Urdu, it is equally so in the case of Hindi, for the Devnagri script too ‘is generally admitted not to be of indigenous invention.’<sup>9</sup>

8. See ‘Hindustani’ in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

9. *Ibid.*

Curiously enough, the provenance of Urdu poetry was the Deccan. The first spur which it received was given not by Delhi, as may be expected, but by the Muslim Courts of Bijāpur and Golconda, whose rulers were its great exponents. Themselves poets of remarkable ability and distinction, they relished Urdu poetry, which made marvellous progress under their patronage. They had at their courts such prominent poets as Ibn Nishāti and Nusrat, who are justly held as 'the heralds and pioneers' of Urdu poetry.<sup>10</sup>

Born in the Deccan towards the close of the sixteenth century, Urdu poetry received a definite standard of form, a century later, at the hands of Wali,<sup>11</sup> significantly called 'the father of *Rekhta*'. It is to him that Urdu poetry owes its introduction into Northern India. His example was followed at Delhi, where a new school of poets sprang up. Of

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10. For the lives and works of these and numerous other poets and scholars, *vide Urdu Literature*, by R. B. Saksena; *Āb-i-Hayāt*, by M. Muhammad Hussain Āzād; and 'Hindustani' in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

11. Shams Wali Allāh, commonly known as Wali, was a resident of Aurangābād and a contemporary and townsman of Sirāj, who too was a great scholar and poet. Wali has left a *Diwān*, which, when first appeared at Delhi, set the whole literary city ablaze. (*Vide Āb-i-Hayāt* and Khuda Bakhsh's article in *M. U. J.* (July, 1931), p. 13).

this school, the most distinguished members were Hātim, Nāji, Mazmūn, Abrū, Khān Ārzū, Sauda, Mir Taqi, Zauq and Ghālīb. It was in the last quarter of the nineteenth century that the last-named realized the limitations of *Ghazal* and the shortcomings of Urdu poetry, but it fell to the share of his promising pupil, Iltāf Hussain Hāli, who inaugurated the reform that was so urgently required.<sup>12</sup>

About the middle of the eighteenth century the literary centre of gravity shifted from Delhi to Lucknow, where a new school of poets came into being. "There", says S. Khuda Bakhsh, "Urdu poetry put forth fresh blossom and bloom." Ārzū, Sauda and Mir made it their home. Their efforts in raising the poetical prestige of Lucknow were seconded and reinforced by those of Mir Hassan, Mir Anis, Mirza Dabir, Mir Soz and many others. Among the later poets of renown belonging to the Lucknow School, Ātish and Nāsikh hold a high place. Mir Anis and Mirza Dabir, it may be mentioned here, made a departure from the ordinary style of Urdu poetry and

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12. *Āb-i-Hayāt*, pp. 88 ff.; Sir Abdul Qadir's article in *J. R. S. A.*, 10th January, 1936; and Khuda Bakhsh's article in *M. U. J.* (July, 1931), pp. 13 and 14. For the lives and literature of these poets and others, see *Urdu Literature*, by R. B. Saksena; *Āb-i-Hāyāt*, by M. Muhammad Hussain Azād; and 'Hindustani' in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

greatly polished and refined the Urdu language. They composed *marsiya*s, or elegies on the martyrdom of Imām Hussain, the grandson of the Prophet of Islām, and vastly enriched the store of Urdu literature and made it popular in the country. Their style has been very effectively employed by Munshi Jawāla Pershād '*Barq*' and Pandit Brij Narāin '*Chākbast*', who are well-known in Hindu as well as Muslim literary circles.

This brief account of the Lucknow School will not be complete without a short reference to the late Pandit Ratan Nāth Sarshār, who holds a unique position among the writers of Urdu prose. He was a great writer of fiction and his *Fasāna-i-Āzād* is one of the master-pieces of Urdu literature. In this beautiful book of his, he has beautifully mirrored the life of the rich and the poor in Lucknow. Besides this book of great bulk and beauty, he wrote many others which are noted for his treatment and style.<sup>13</sup>

I pass on to Rāmpur, which after the decline of the Lucknow School of Poets, became the nucleus of poetical eminence, capable of expansion

**Rampur School  
of Urdu poets.**

13. Sir Abdul Qadir's article in *J. R. S. A.*, 10th January, 1936; and Khuda Bakhsh's article in *M. U. J.* (July, 1931), p. 45.



and assimilation. It was there that the former two schools of poetry were merged into one. There they met to revise and modify their poetical standard and to make necessary improvements. Artificiality, verbosity and extravagance were ruled out; archaic expressions and verbal inaccuracies were done away with; unnecessary ornamentation and the use of exuberant phrases were put an end to. Simplicity, fidelity to life and naturalness became their watchwords. Of this wholesome scheme, Dāgh was the principal exponent.<sup>14</sup>

Patna, the *El Dorado* of learning, has retained its 'challenging greatness' throughout its existence, despite its fluctuating fortune. In the reign of Emperor Alamgir, it supplied the Delhi Princes with a distinguished teacher in the person of Mirza Bedil, who has been rightly called her 'literary crown' on account of his learning and scholarship. Among other poets of the Patna School, Fitrat and Rāsikh stand out pre-eminent.<sup>15</sup>

I can infinitely add to the list of poets and their productions; but, for want of space, I am

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14. *Urdu Literature*, by Khuda Bakhsh in *M. U. J.*, (July, 1931), pp. 15 and 16.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 16 and 17.

constrained to pass on to the development of Urdu prose. A beginning was made in A. C. 1781, when the Maḍrasah of Fort William was founded at Calcutta and oriental scholars of eminence were invited from all over the country to prepare Urdu text-books for Government officials. Momentous as this step was, equally far-reaching were its consequences. The introduction of lithography in 1832 A. C. put vernacular books at the disposal of the educated at extremely low prices. Again the replacement of Persian by Urdu as the official language of the Court in 1832 A. C.; the establishment of a vernacular press, despite its vacillating freedom; and the introduction and popularization of western light and liberalism,—have all contributed very materially to our language by enriching its vocabulary and broadening its outlook on life and letters. Furthermore, such remarkable institutions as the Anjuman-i-Taraqqi-i-Urdu with its head-quarters at Aurangābād, the Translation Bureau of the Osmānia University at Hyderābād Deccan, the Dār-ul-Musannifin at Āzamgarh, the Madrasat-ul-Wāizin at Lucknow, and the Jāmia Millia at Delhi, have been rendering valuable services and are indispensable for the life and literature of our language. Other similar institutions are nascent, but unanimously supported, they will

become a great asset to the language.<sup>16</sup>

I am not out to make a case for Urdu in this book, but as a well-wisher of India and a son of the soil, I must take this opportunity of drawing the attention of our educationists to the necessity for a *lingua franca* and of suggesting a language which would best serve the purpose. Urdu, as we have seen, is Indian, quite as much as the Indian Musalmāns themselves. It had its birth not in Arabia, Irān or Afghānistān, but in India, in the intermingling of races and the resultant intermixture of languages, in the action and reaction of two civilizations on each other. The share of Hindi and Hindus in the making of Urdu is, as we have seen, not less than that of Persian and Musalmāns. But for the difference of script, the spoken Hindi and the spoken Urdu are the same.<sup>17</sup> The question that confronts us here is: which of the two scripts—Urdu and Devnāgri—should be adopted in writing? It is not difficult to choose between the two. The script employed in writing Urdu has been the script of the Court language for centuries. The Mughals, the Sikhs and the British kept it on without discouraging or discarding it. Even at present it is employed

**Need for a *lingua franca* and chances of Urdu.**

16. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

17. See 'Hindustani' in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

in the governments of some of the provinces of this country. Again, the script used in a huge bulk of the periodical literature of the Hindus and others is neither Hindi nor any other, but Urdu, which shows that the Urdu script is most widely used in India. Its widespread prevalence and popularity indicate that it is indispensable. Moreover, unlike Devnāgri, which is confined to a limited number of the population of India, the Urdu script is common to many other countries of Asia and is apt to bring India nearer to other nations of the world if it is universally adopted. When such is the case, why not join hands and make Urdu our *lingua franca*,<sup>18</sup> for is it not a common heritage of both Hindus and Muslims? Is it not a living link between them? Call it Hindustāni, the language of Hindustān, if the word 'Urdu' is Turkish and hence repugnant. This, however, does not mean that I would discourage or disparage provincial vernaculars, or allow them to be replaced by Urdu, or even encourage

18. This view is shared and supported by no less a statesman and scholar than the Rt. Hon. Dr. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, who while expressing his inability to preside over a recent *Mushā'ira* held at Simla, said :—

"It is, however, a deep conviction with me that the only bond which can unite one section of the community with the other is a common culture and possibly also common economic interest. I am afraid in the circumstances in which we are placed we cannot look to any other bond. It has, therefore, been a matter of great regret to me that

Urdu at their cost. My point is that there must be one all-India language, capable of uniting all the peoples and provinces of India, and that Urdu (or Hindustāni, as some would prefer to call it) can best serve this purpose, because at present it enjoys greater vogue than any other language of India. Let the provincial vernaculars develop in their own provinces and contribute what they can to the common cause of Indian culture and nationalism. Make them *media* of expression and instruction in their own provinces if they are most widely spoken and understood there; but at the same time, make Urdu (or Hindustāni) a second language where it is not the general medium of expression and instruction. This will unite India linguistically, and once linguistic unification is accomplished, unification in other directions will follow.

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specially in Northern India, by which I mean the Punjab and the United Provinces, we should have been dissipating our energies in pursuing divergent lines of progress. I do not look and have never looked upon Urdu being peculiarly Muslim or a peculiarly Hindu language. I have always looked upon Urdu both as a language and a medium of culture, as a common heritage of both the communities. I am old enough to remember the times when both Hindus and Muhammadans were devoted to this culture and indulged in mutual but generous rivalries. But old times are changed and old manners gone." (*Tribune*, dated 4th October, 1935.) The Hon ble Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, Education Member to the Government of India, also stressed this point while delivering the Convocation Address of the Aligarh Muslim University, for which *vide Eastern Times*, dated 19th November, 1935).



Enough, I hope, has been recorded to convey to the reader a clear and correct idea about the origin of Urdu and its development,— enough to dispel doubts about it, to demonstrate its beauty and to illustrate its importance in the existing atmosphere. It is highly gratifying to find that it has found friends in the camps of both the communities—Muslims as well as Hindus; and there is no doubt that under the influence and guidance of such distinguished scholars and statesmen as the Rt. Hon. Dr. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Hon. Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, the Rt. Hon. Sir Akbar Hyderi and the Hon. Sir Abdul Qadir it will receive the recognition which it so richly deserves in the educational system of our country.

## CHAPTER XV

### RETROSPECT

#### GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

There is no doubt that principal educational institutions were schools and colleges, as must have become clear from the preceding account; but it will be wrong to suppose that all that educational advance which characterized the Muslim Period was entirely due to them, for there were other institutions which too had much to do with the same work. No book on Education in Muslim India can ever claim to be complete without a short account of each of them. While summing up the subject, it seems necessary to deal with them in brief and to bring out their permanent place in the life of the people.

**Introductory.**      **Libraries.**      “The libraries which came into existence in India as a result of the love of learning of many of its Muslim rulers were”, says Sir Abdul Qadir, “a great help to the cause of learning. It was not only kings and princes who collected rich stores of literature for then enlightenment, but noble-men of all classes vied with one another in owning such collections.” Often these libraries

were availed of by persons other than their owners, and at times they were thrown open to the public in general. It may, moreover, be noted that 'in those days every well-to-do lover of books had enough for his requirements in his own house' and that 'people also used to borrow books from one another and prepared copies of them for their own collections.' Most of this literary wealth was destroyed during the Mutiny of 1857 but the remnants are still in existence and are the proud possession of some ancient families and Indian Princes, who have carefully treasured them as their heirlooms. Some of them, when escaped, found their way westward and are to be seen in some of the libraries of Europe. They include some of those manuscripts which bear the seals and signatures of Muslim Emperors and noblemen who owned them. "They furnish," says Sir Abdul Qadir, "a silent but eloquent testimony to the culture of days gone by when in the absence of modern facilities for the propagation of literature and the multiplication of books human patience endured great hardships to preserve for posterity the best thoughts of the learned men of antiquity." <sup>1</sup>

1. The Hon'ble Sir Abdul Qadir has contributed a highly interesting article on '*The Cultural Influences of Islam*

Like libraries, literary societies also were founded in India during the **Literary Societies.** Muslim Period. Here again the lead was given by the Royal House and was followed by the nobility and other classes with such zeal that, as noted before, there sprang up numerous other similar societies in different parts of Muslim India and became a valuable aid to education in general.<sup>2</sup>

Another important institution, which was popularized in India by the **Mushairas or poetical contests.** Musalmāns and to which a short reference has already been made in the Introductory Chapter, is known as *mushā'ira*, which means a symposium or poetical contest. *mushā'irās* were frequently convened and poets from different parts of the country joined together with their poetical compositions and recited them in the presence of large gatherings amidst loud applauses and expressions of approbation, such as *Khūb*, *Marhaba* and *Muqarrar*. A *mushā'ira* always afforded a pleasure and pastime, and had great educative value and moral effect. "This institution, though not enjoying the vogue which it did in the days gone by, is," according to Sir Abdul Qadir, "still fairly popular

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*in India* to J. R. S. A., 10th January, 1936, to which I am indebted for the above information.

2. See pp. 42 and 43 of this book.

and often brings together people of different classes and communities, who manage to forget their differences for the time being, in their admiration for a common literature.'"<sup>3</sup>

Education was diffused not only through these institutions, but also through mosques which were founded by both kings and others, and monasteries which were started by the heads of religious orders and other pious persons, throughout the length and breadth of the Muslim Empire. Many of the mosques and monasteries which are to be seen all over India were founded and endowed during the Muslim Period. They have continued to our own times, because, from the very nature of their being the places of divine worship, they were permanent—at least more permanent than purely educational institutions, such as schools and colleges. It is not, therefore, too much to say that they immensley added to the volume of work done in the domain of education by *maktabs* and *madrasahs*, libraries and literary societies. It may also be noted that they were numerous — too numerous to be enumerated here in the short space at my disposal, for the subject is very vast and requires a

**Mosques and  
monasteries.**

3. Sir Abdul Qadir's article in *J. R. S. A.*, 10th January, 1936.



separate volume to itself. I am, therefore, constrained to close this phase of my inquiry into the subject with the remark that they played a prominent part in the propagation of Muslim culture and erudition under the influence of such saints and scholars as Shaikh Ali Hajveri (famous as Dāta Sāhib), Sayyad Hussain Zanjāni, Khwājāh Mu'in-ud-Din Chisti, Hazrat Māhbūb-i-Ilāhi, Bāwa Farid Ganj Shakar, Khwāja Bahā-ud-Din Multāni and Hazrat Mujaddad Alf Sāni, who were loved and respected by all for the simplicity of their lives, the purity of their thoughts and the divinity of their ideals.<sup>4</sup>

While *maktabs* and *madrasahs*, libraries and literary societies, *mushā-irās* and other literary institutions diffused only cultural education, technical training was imparted in *kārkhānās*, or workshops, which were scattered all over the country and had the support of the State as well as private individuals. So superior was the training given in them through the system of apprenticeship that Indian artisans

4. *Mohammadanism*, by D. H. Margoliouth, p. 117; *Spirit of Islam*, by Amir Ali, pp. 471 and 472; and *Promotion of Learning in India*, by N. N. Law, p. 19. Also see Dāta Sāhib's *Kashf-ul-Māhjūb* and *Kashf-ul-Asrār*, a perusal of which will not be without pleasure and profit.

and craftsmen became proverbial for their skill and workmanship.<sup>5</sup>

Pressed further home, the meaning conveyed in the above account resolves itself into this that education,—both cultural and technical,—was a systematic affair in the best periods of Muslim ascendancy, though it did fall into decay during the days of anarchy and confusion. Such educational richness must necessarily present a large selection of ideas to the modern educationist in the educational reconstruction of to-day. Discipline and devotion to learning; social life which fosters fellow-feelings and strengthens the bonds of brotherhood; comprehensive *curricula*, with a suitable standard of class work; spiritual atmosphere in schools and colleges, with an intellectual flame capable of kindling the moral emotions and the inner-nature of the student; 'a broad humanism', in which general knowledge, *i.e.*, knowledge of all the important affairs of the world, occupies a most important place; co-ordination of education imparted with the profession to be followed in after-life; the injunction that 'no one should be allowed

Musalmans' contribution to Indian educational thought and practice

5. *Vide* Chapter XIII, and p. 241, f. n. 9, of this book.

to neglect those things which the present time requires'; the principle that the poor should be educated free<sup>6</sup> and the doors of all educational institutions should be flung wide open to all indiscriminately; and that education is a preparation for life and for life after death,—are some of the special features of the Muslim System of Education, which, to my mind, are the essential ingredients of good liberal education, but which are, unfortunately, woefully wanting in the Modern System of Education.<sup>7</sup> Regarded as ideals of education, they are a most valuable contribution to Indian educational thought and practice, and their importance lies in the fact that they produced great scholars, savants and seekers after truth, whose output on the intellectual side has few parallels in the whole history of Indian education.

The panacea for all the ailments from  
which India is suffering is  
**Some Suggestions.** education and it is for her

6. It may be pointed out here that no tuition fee was charged in the schools and colleges founded and maintained by the State during the Muslim Period. Often students were provided with board and lodging free and it is in this sense that the phrase 'free education' has been used.

7. Some of the indictments drawn against the Modern System of Education are:—

".....It implies that the schools have no spiritual life which touches the boy's inner nature no corporate unit which appeals to and can sustain his affectionate loyalty, no

educationists to rise to the height of the occasion. It is for them to detect the defects and to apply their remedies, to lead the stream of learning to the seemingly barren but otherwise fertile fields of illiteracy, to irrigate the lifeless minds of the masses through the channel of their own mother-tongue, and to galvanize them into a life of efflorescence by their indefatigable efforts and industry. The growing desire for education and the pressing demand for reform are highly hopeful signs, indicating that the soil is quite prepared and only the seeds are to be sown. So there is no reason why the present system of education should not prove profitable if it is reconstructed on the foundation of the principles and practices of the past, enriched with the experiences of later times. In other words, a

moral or intellectual flame which may kindle his emotions." It "is soul-destroying" It "does not equip those who undergo it for citizenship." It "is top-heavy." Dr. Tagore describes the present system of education as a 'two storied structure without a staircase' and deplors the lack of inter-communication between the upper and lower stories. He recommends vernaculars as *media* of instruction and remarks that 'mother-tongue is to a student what mother's milk is to a baby.' The Calcutta University Commission pointed out some of the worst defects and drawbacks of the Modern System of Education and suggested their remedies. Unfortunately, however, their recommendations fell through and their proposals were turned down for one reason or the other. (For the extracts quoted above, *vide India*, 1919, pp. 136 ff.; *India*, 1920, pp. 170 ff., and pp. 29-30 f. n. 11 of this book).

systematic study of Asiatic cultures is as essential for a complete education for life as the study of western arts and sciences, and the one should not be pursued to the exclusion of the other. The vast stores of Arabic and Sanskrit, Persian and Pāli must be explored and the richest treasures of thought and literature contained in English and other Western languages must be exploited. In their combination lies the secret of success. The synthesis of the different cultures of the country and the encouragement of such educational institutions as the Jāmia Millia and the Shāntiniketan, which stand for such synthesis and in which ancient traditional practice is combined with the most modern scientific thought; the division of the country into linguistic units and the establishment of an independent university in each, with its own language as the medium of instruction, will go a long way in solving the present-day problems of our country. But this presupposes the preparation of text-books in different vernaculars, because the existing vernacular literature is very meagre and the heavy structure of a responsible university cannot be raised on such flimsy materials. For this reason books on various arts and sciences, books on citizenship, civic rights, and other similar subjects. will have to be written and



translated from other languages and put within the reach of students. It is on such a foundation that Japan has constructed its towering educational edifice. We may imitate Japan, or nearer home, the lead given by the Osmānia University in this respect may be followed with advantage. Translation bureaus of the type of one at the Osmānia University may be established and the task of translating books into vernaculars may be taken in hand. The greatest service that can be rendered to India at present is to impart education to her ignorant masses and to enable them thereby to enjoy the gifts of life in a wholesome measure. It is high time that the Indian educationists should address themselves earnestly to this task and those in power and position should help them in accomplishing it. The vernacularization recommended above is full of beneficial results, but it is apprehended that it may add energy to the increasing provincialism. To counteract this as well as to nip the growth of provincialism<sup>8</sup> in the bud, it is necessary to choose an all-India medium of expression and to make it a second language in every university thus established. The curriculum should be recast and care must be taken to

8. *I. e.* provincialism as a barrier to national unity.

make it as comprehensive and catholic as possible. Literary education should be combined with religious instruction and facilities must also be provided for technical training and vocational knowledge.<sup>9</sup> Having imparted elementary knowledge to the student, he should be allowed to have his own choice in the selection of his subjects of study. No subject should be forcibly thrust on any student, but at the same time 'none should be allowed to neglect those things which the present time requires'. Finally, failing a return to the old Indian System, 'the soul-destroying system of examination', which hypnotizes the Indian mind so much, must be mended<sup>10</sup> so as to make it simple and free

9. It is generally admitted that 'Indians still possess great capacity and great genius', but they require education and encouragement. Highly appreciating 'the patronage by the Moghal Emperors of the arts and crafts of the people over whom they ruled', and commending 'to those in high places in India to follow the example which the Moghal Emperors have set them in this respect', Lord Zetland observed at a meeting of the Royal Society of Arts: 'There is an ample store of artistic genius still to be found in India, and it only requires the patronage of the ruling princes of the States (who are indeed great patrons) and the leading residents of British India, to bring that genius once more to fruition' (*Vide J. R. S. A.*, 10th January, 1936, pp. 240-41.)

10. I am opposed to the abolition of examinations, as desired by many, and am of opinion that as a test of efficiency, they are necessary. (Those interested in the subject will find some useful information in *An Examination of Examinations* by Sir Philip Hartog and Dr. E.C. Rhodes; and *Systems of Examinations*, by Dr. Zia-ud-Din Ahmad.)

from the element of uncertainty which dominates it. "Let us watch scientifically what is going on," says Sir Michael Sadler "record what we find and analyse the water that is flowing under the buildings of education. It is the water of human life. Scientific enquiry and report is what the present state of affairs requires." Sir Sadler is right, but mere enquiries and reports will not do; something practical must be done. By careful investigation and systematic experiment, suitable methods must be devised for making the examination a test of ability and intelligence rather than of cramming capacity, which is the case at present. Better means must be adopted for valuing the worth of answer-books and assessing their excellence—means which must be less liable to the distressing doubts and appalling uncertainties of the present system. The individual examiner must be made as infallible in his task as possible; and efforts must be made to eliminate, or at least to minimize, the element of chance. In short, the virtues of the old Indian System must be revived and from their matrix a new system of examination must be carved in the mould of the most modern scientific thought.

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## INDEX

[*Abbreviations.* — M.=Maulāna, P.=Prince, Q.=Qāzi,  
S.=Sayyad, and Sh.=Shaikh.]

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